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WHY MEN FAIL

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	3
<i>William A. White, M.D., former president American Psychiatric Association; director St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Washington, D. C.</i>	
I PARENTS OF FAILURE	25
<i>Douglas A. Thom, M.D., director of the Division of Mental Hygiene, Massachusetts</i>	
II THE FIRST JOB	49
<i>Arthur H. Ruggles, M.D., professor of psychiatry and mental hygiene, Yale University</i>	
III SEX HAS THROWN A BOMB INTO BUSINESS	71
<i>Smith Ely Jelliffe, M.D., Ph.D., associate editor "Psychoanalytic Review"</i>	
IV WIVES WHO HELP THEIR HUSBANDS TO FAIL	95
<i>George K. Pratt, M.D., the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, New York City</i>	
V "QUEER" FAILURES	129
<i>Karl A. Menninger, M.D., Menninger Psychiatric Clinic, Topeka, Kansas</i>	

CHAPTER

PAGE

- VI DAY-DREAMERS AND BLUFFERS . . . 163
George K. Pratt, M.D.

- VII DEPRESSIONS . . . 191
Karl A. Menninger, M.D.

- VIII BEATING HANDICAPS . . . 223
*Morris Fishbein, M.D., Editor of the
 "Journal of the American Medical Association" and of "Hygeia"*

- IX HANDICAP—OR ALIBI? . . . 241
William A. White, M.D.

- X FEAR . . . 263
*Abraham Myerson, M.D., professor of
 neurology, Tufts College Medical School,
 Boston*

- XI WHY WOMEN FAIL . . . 285
*Anita M. Mühl, M.D., former assistant
 physician St. Elizabeth's Hospital, and
 psychiatrist Providence Hospital psychiatric clinic*

- XII JOB MISFITS . . . 305
*V. V. Anderson, M.D., director of medical
 research for R. H. Macy & Company, Inc.*

- XIII HOME-MADE FAILURES . . . 329
*Herman Adler, M.D., director of the
 Institute for Juvenile Research, Chicago*

WHY MEN FAIL

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

BY WILLIAM A. WHITE, M.D.

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Association; director St. Elizabeth's
Hospital, Washington, D. C.*

THOUGH the word may have a different meaning for each one of us, every one wants success in life. No one wants to fail—in his business, his friendships, his loves or in the struggle to reach his ideals.

But many of us do fail, for reasons which we could overcome if we understood them. A large percentage of these preventable failures spring from faults in our mental make-up—from bad mental habits, a wrong attitude toward life, inability to understand ourselves.

We see what a heavy toll disorders of the mind exact from human happiness when we realize that of all the beds in all the hospitals throughout the United States one in every two

is for mental disease; in other words, there are as many beds for mental ailments as for all other ailments put together. This does not count the enormous number of people with minor mental defects who manage to carry on, though inefficiently, without hospital treatment.

So far as success in business is concerned, the American people are regarded as the most fortunate on earth. This is partly because we have a passion for efficiency. When we want to build an automobile we make a careful study of all principles and motions involved, decide how each can be performed most effectively, and plan a factory along those lines.

We have carried the same idea into medicine, believing that it is more efficient to keep people well than to cure them after they have become sick. We have examined the machinery of the body in detail, studied under what conditions it functions best, and have drawn up and broadcast innumerable health codes. Though the same study is being made of the mind to show how apparently minor defects of character may make for success or failure

in life, this branch of medicine, known as psychiatry, has been late in developing. At last, however, it has taken its place in the program of preventive medicine, in the form of the so-called mental hygiene movement.

Of course, in speaking of success or failure we must always remember that the terms are relative. Some of the greatest successes may look like failures. The story is told of an Oriental potentate whose son was plunged into the depths of melancholia. Wise men were summoned to advise what should be done. After long consideration they decided that he could be cured only if they could find an absolutely happy man and transfer the shirt of the happy man to the patient. Emissaries were despatched to all parts of the kingdom, and finally a really happy man was found. But, lo! he had no shirt.

The implications of this story are obvious. It is not so much in the externals that happiness or failure resides, but in us and our attitude toward them. Fate may deal a terrible blow, as it has in the recent Mississippi flood disaster, and many will undoubtedly be

crushed as a result; but others, who are more happily constituted, will pick up the fragments and carry on with little if any injury to their capacity for happiness. We may not be able to control circumstances, but we do have some control of the effect circumstances have on us.

X It is these inner values—our catalogue of assets and liabilities with which we tackle the problems of life—that matter most. The world as it is we have to accept for the most part, but our own ways of dealing with it may or may not be efficient. These ways can be changed if only we know about them, what they are, and how they work. Most persons take themselves and their ways of feeling and thinking for granted. If it were only possible to take stock of them from time to time, just as we are learning to take stock of our physical selves by regular health examinations!

Realizing how much it would mean to the average man and woman if a group of the leading psychiatrists of the country would tell, simply and clearly, what they have learned about the causes of failure, and about

how failure may be turned into success, Mrs. William Brown Meloney, editor of the "Herald Tribune" Sunday Magazine, took the problem to the American Medical Association and the American Psychiatric Association, and with their approval and indorsement called a conference of leading physicians in the field of mental hygiene, to ask for suggestions and assistance in mapping out a series of articles on why men fail.

The "Herald Tribune" was especially interested in this undertaking because of the good results for public health which followed the calling of the adult weight conference eighteen months before, and the series of articles on healthful weight control which were written for the magazine by members of that conference.

The conference on why men fail was held in Cincinnati on June 1 and 2 and was largely attended by the leading psychiatrists of the country. Among those who were present at the conference were:

Dr. William A. White, director St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Washington, D. C., professor

of psychiatry Georgetown University; Dr. Bernard Glueck, lecturer New School for Social Research, New York City; Dr. Floyd Haviland, former president American Psychiatric Association, superintendent Manhattan State Hospital, New York City; Dr. L. Vernon Briggs, Massachusetts advisory board for the examination of prisoners; Dr. Karl A. Menninger, Menninger Psychiatric Clinic, Topeka, Kansas; Dr. H. W. Mitchell, former president American Psychiatric Association; Dr. Douglas A. Thom, director Division of Mental Hygiene, Massachusetts; Dr. George M. Kline, commissioner Department of Mental Diseases, Boston; Dr. Arthur H. Ruggles, professor of psychiatry and mental hygiene, Yale University; Dr. Earl D. Bond, secretary of American Psychiatric Association; Dr. Ann Bingham, psychiatrist Metropolitan Life Insurance Company; Dr. William Russell, professor of psychiatry Cornell University; Dr. Macfie Campbell, professor of psychiatry Harvard University and Boston Psychopathic Hospital; Dr. Leonard Outhwaite, associate director Laura

Spellman Rockefeller Memorial Fund; Dr. Anita M. Mühl, formerly assistant physician St. Elizabeth's Hospital, and psychiatrist Providence Hospital and Psychiatric Clinic at Washington, D. C.; Dr. George K. Pratt, National Committee for Mental Hygiene.

Other doctors who could not attend but consented to write articles for the series on why men fail were Dr. Smith Ely Jelliffe, associate editor of the "Psychoanalytic Review" and author of many books on nervous and mental problems; Dr. Herman Adler, director of the Institute for Juvenile Research, Chicago; Dr. Morris Fishbein, editor of the "Journal of the American Medical Association" and of "Hygeia"; Dr. Abraham Myerson, professor of neurology Tufts College Medical School, Boston, and author of many books on nervous and mental problems; and Dr. V. V. Anderson, director of medical research for R. H. Macy & Company, Inc.

The conference discussed many of the mental problems which lead to success or failure in life, what mental readjustments are necessary for the rich man's son, the reformer's

Chapter
children, the children of criminals and of the poor and obscure; how sex prejudice leads to business failure; how a man may be made or marred by the attitude of his wife or his mother; what makes the bluffer, the day-dreamer, the grouch, the "hard-boiled" man; how lack of love sometimes makes the criminal; why women fail in business, and how they can overcome natural disadvantages.

These and other aspects of mental hygiene in its relation to success and failure were later dealt with in a series of articles written as a result of the conference, sponsored by the American Psychiatric Association and the American Medical Association, and now published for the first time in book form.

It is hoped that this book may cause many a reader to give greater consideration to his inner, real motives and his ways and means of meeting the day's issues, to the end that he may come to see the signs of futile methods and lost motion and take the necessary steps for improving his efficiency and increasing his happiness.

For after all, our success is measured by the

ability with which we are able to bring our passions, feelings, emotions under the control and guidance of our intelligence, and so press them into the service of our ideals. Success does not just happen. It must be sought and wooed and deserved, and it is most likely to be found if sought intelligently.

The studies that have been made during the last few years on the factors that enter into character formation have been of inestimable value. They have shown us over and over again how and why people have come to be what they are, either successes or failures, either happy or unhappy, either well or ill, and have taught us that we are never in a position to decide arbitrarily upon the possibilities of any human being, for we find many failing with all the advantages seemingly on their side and many succeeding in spite of what appear to be overwhelming odds. The human being is too infinitely complex for us to be arbitrary in our judgments of possibilities; we have learned always to try for better results and are often rewarded by finding that an individual for whom there seemed to

be little hope develops, under wise and sympathetic guidance and assistance, powers that could not have been foretold and were not dreamed of.

It is not an easy thing to examine ourselves in a judicial frame of mind which will acknowledge shortcomings as well as excellences, for we are [naturally blind to that which does not please us in ourselves.]

Life, however, is inexorable in its demands, and society has set up certain standards, flexible within limits, to which we must measure up if we are to meet with success and the approval of our fellows: Like Procrustes, the famous robber who tied travelers to a bed, cutting off their protruding limbs when they were longer than the bed and stretching them when they were shorter, [Society chops off the heads of those who offend against it, or stretches on a bed of lifelong suffering those who do not measure up to its demands.] The only freedom lies in first recognizing these demands clearly and not permitting ourselves to be blind to them just because we may not approve of them, and, secondly, meeting them

as effectively as we can with our equipment.

While many men fail because they have some definite physical handicap, it is with that more subtle group of failures due to certain set ways of behavior, certain kinds of conduct under given circumstances, and certain types of personality that this book will deal especially.

To give some idea of what I mean: [Man is the only animal that is able to profit by past experience; to remember the past; to use the experience gained in the past to assist in living in the present and to shape his conduct toward a future goal.] This marvelous advantage we possess over animals has, however, its drawbacks, for we are all inclined to a greater or less extent, unconsciously, to carry the past through life too much like an old man of the sea, on our backs, weighing us down with outworn traditions, superstitions and prejudices that involve us in all sorts of difficulties with the present.

A great French physician has shown how his patients with hysteria relive in their attacks highly emotional past experiences. Thus

one reënacts the events that culminated in the suicide of a dear friend; another relives the death agonies of a beloved mother, while others do the same sort of thing as the result of being frightened or injured in various ways.

It took 300 years to overcome the prejudice against potatoes, and we all know how long it took to live down the superstition of witchcraft and how violently we support our politics or our religion, although we may know little about either, only having been brought up as children in a particular set of beliefs. This conservative spirit has its advantages in making rapid and often ill-advised changes in beliefs, in standards, in institutions, impossible; but it also enslaves us to beliefs and practices that have long outlived their values. Progress, happiness and success are attained only at the cost of a constant revaluation of our beliefs, ideals, and habits of thought and action, and failure comes only too often as the result of being saddled with a dead past.

A boy was taught by his mother never to leave a task uncompleted, and especially al-

ways to finish a book once started. For years after he reached adulthood he dreaded to start a book, especially a long one, for fear it might not be interesting or useful but would have to be finished whether or no, and it took many years to reëvaluate this perfectly good teaching so that he could keep what was good and discard what was useless, so he could start a book and lay it aside if it did not prove worth while. During all this time he never really understood why he had to act as he did, and it was only when the true motive for his conduct, the desire to do as his mother wished, came to clear consciousness that he was able to evaluate it properly and rearrange his conduct accordingly.

Such are the hidden, unconscious motives that drive us to action, often to our detriment. They sometimes are so strong and persistent that everything the person undertakes comes to naught, until perchance he may make of necessity a virtue and come to be proud of his failures, thus getting the only satisfaction possible from a life of blasted hopes.

An Austrian physician tells of himself that

when he was a boy there was in the house a drawer in which were kept the knives and forks. When he was told to get a knife he reached in and it seemed invariably he brought out a fork, and when he was told to fetch a fork he seemed as invariably to get hold of a knife. What seemed to him, at the time, to be the spitefulness of these objects caused him to make a record of his failures and successes and much to his surprise he found they balanced. It was only the failures that had impressed themselves upon his mind, the successes were forgotten. Things are never as bad as they seem, and we have all manner of successes that we take no note of, either because they relate to unimportant matters or are not associated with any experiences that emphasize them in our thoughts. Taking pride in misfortune is a dangerous attitude of mind, and, as in this case, often as little warranted.

And so the story goes. These hidden motives, these side-trackings of our energies up blind alleys, are almost as numerous as the individuals who have them, and that means

all of us. Success and failure are but matters of degree after all. They run the gamut of human experience, from the child of wealth and indulgent parents who has had everything the world affords until there is nothing left to strive for, to the poor sickly boy who has been beaten so often that he no longer has the heart to strive; from the child that has been loved so much that he has never been allowed to have any difficulties and who fails at the first real problem when no one is around to solve it for him, to the child who has been brought up in hate and rebellion and attacks the established order of things from the first; from the super-idealist who has never really contacted with reality at all and does not know what to do about it when it comes his way, to the super-realist whose experiences have been all so discouraging and disillusioning that he has become cynical and pessimistic.

These are but a few examples, to which should be added failures due to timidity, to fears, to all sorts of wrong thinking; failures in the family of husbands and wives to make adequate adjustments; failures in bringing up

children, and the failures of the child in school and out; failures in business life, whether as a result of wrong vocational choice or for other causes, such as inability to submit to the needed discipline or routine, lack of continuity, or bad habits. The list is endless, but back of them all lie causes that are discoverable and that fall again into the same general patterns, though with infinite variations as to detail. It is hoped that through a discussion of some of these problems the reader may gain some insight into the way failure comes about and will not be content to blame some one else, or fate, but will look within for causes which he may control to his advantage.

If we were to attempt an account of the human being from birth to death from the point of view of the ways he could fail at the different stages of his career, some of the outstanding points would be these: He might be born of parents who furnished inadequate ideals, or parents who from lack of love or from over-anxiety early instilled false standards or fears or distorted ways of thinking that later would

prove disastrous; his education might be clumsily ordered, so that, perhaps due to an uncongenial school atmosphere or the unfortunate personality of a teacher or for many other reasons, it might leave him with a distaste for work or learning or lacking in ambition and with a sense of failure and inadequacy; his early adolescence might, from ignorance or misfortune, result in disagreeable or terrifying sex experiences that might seriously warp his character, and his later development might be further hampered by getting in the wrong job and being forced by circumstances to stay there, having his future blighted by never being able to find any real satisfaction through self-expression in his life-work.

On the other hand, a successful individual would have been able to negotiate all these obstacles. He would have had wise and loving parents, a joyous childhood not too much fraught with frustrating don'ts, but with the emphasis on encouragement and approval, with a smooth transition into adolescence, a wholesome sex enlightenment, and a vocation that offered self-expression and was a natural

transition from the play of childhood to the play and joy of work and accomplishment.

Life must be neither so hard that it crushes nor so easy that it weakens. Strength comes only from overcoming obstacles and not by having the way made easy. The successful accomplishment of a hard task brings reward in a feeling of self-reliance that makes not only for happiness but is a character builder in itself.

The human mind has enormous possibilities for solving difficulties that seem as we look at them to be unsolvable, and it is this message of hope that is the object of this book. The book has been written by psychiatrists engaged in the work of assisting those who are on the wrong track to right themselves, and discusses briefly a few only of the many types of cases that seek assistance, in the hope that they will serve to illustrate the way in which the modern students of the mind are thinking about them and so be of aid to those who are floundering, perhaps in despair, because they do not know in what direction to seek help.

Success and failure when due to emotional

factors, to false directions, to faulty ways of thinking—in other words, when their origin is a mental twist of some sort—are in the field of human functions—the mind—which is the most modifiable part of us. Even though we may not have had the advantages of education and environment we wish we might have had or would choose for our children, still, when we think of success as it should be thought of, in terms of adequate, in the sense of satisfying, self-expression in creative endeavor, then it is not hard to see how at least much may be done to improve conditions that on their surface seem very bad.

The adult man or woman who cannot relive his childhood may yet learn from his childhood experiences much that will be of help in the remolding of his life along lines of activity that will bring some of the joy of accomplishment.

He may, for example, refine, pick up in his quest, a latent or neglected talent that had been rusting all forgotten these many years and reanimate it into a usefulness that with cultivation may change a drab and hopeless

life to one of joy. Many persons have never had the real pleasure of success until adversity has forced them to remold their lives, when for the first time they have found of what they are really capable.

Mental hygiene clinics have sprung up all over the United States, until now most, if not all, of the large cities have such clinics, as do many smaller cities. These clinics are sometimes connected with general hospitals or with university or medical teaching centers, or they may be run by various state hospitals in the districts from which they draw patients. It is suggested that one who needs help might get his family physician to put him in contact with the nearest clinic, or give him the name of a competent local psychiatrist.

PARENTS OF FAILURE

Pampered through youth, many men and women have their parents to blame for failure. Those who wish their children to succeed must help them throw off the desire for protection, not keep them from establishing their independence.

BY

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CHAPTER I

PARENTS OF FAILURE

THE real reasons for failure, if we admitted them, would frequently be shattering to our self-esteem. No man likes to think that he has failed because of a poor intellectual equipment, or a jealous disposition, or shyness, or a domineering attitude toward others, or resentment of all authority. Consequently, if one or more of these reasons is the correct one, you will usually hear the failure blame his lack of success on some other person, or on circumstance—for neither of which he could be held responsible.

He will say—either to others or to himself—that he couldn't succeed because he never had a square deal, or married too young, or had family responsibilities, or suffered from poor health. We can believe almost anything if it is necessary to protect our pride.

This is the method which the mind adopts

to keep itself from having to face unpleasant truths, just as the body has built up safeguards against physical injury. It is a process of self-deception to which the psychologist has given the name "rationalization," and it is indulged in by almost everybody. It is unconscious, because if we realized we were doing it we would get no comfort from it.

True failures can rarely be attributed to any one single factor. More often they are the result of circumstances and conditions which we have been led to believe were not within our control. As a matter of fact, the lack of control over these conditions is due to the fact that we do not recognize them in time as dangerous shoals on which lives may be wrecked.

One of the problems that every person has to meet in growing up is emancipation from his parents. Failure on the part of the child to establish his own independence and throw off the desire for protection leads to unhappiness and inefficiency in later life.

John M. was a good example of a young man who had not been emancipated. He had

never been allowed to grow up, was lacking in confidence, self-assurance and independence; he was without the normal, healthy urge to move fearlessly alone, unhampered by childish cravings for comfort and protection. At thirty he was almost like a three-year-old child in his attitude toward the world.

At the age of twenty-seven, when he was a senior in one of the post-graduate schools of engineering, he consulted several medical specialists because of pain in the back, frequent vomiting, lack of sleep and loss of weight.

None of the specialists was able to find any evidence of organic disease, so John went to a psychiatrist—not because any one felt he was mentally unbalanced, but as a last resort. He was a finely developed man, but wore an anxious, haggard expression and seemed restless and ill at ease. After a long talk with him and also with his mother, two of his teachers and two of his college friends, the psychiatrist was able to piece out a summary of the principal events in his life.

He was the youngest child and the only boy

in the family. He was born ten years after the next youngest, and his parents regarded his advent with mixed emotions. The father was overjoyed in at last having a son to carry on the family name, while the mother was shocked to find herself bearing a child at her age, and was bitter and resentful.

Her feeling of antagonism did not last long, however. After he was born she became unusually solicitous for his welfare. She tried to anticipate his every want and to protect him from all discomfort. He was rocked, tossed, and petted, and special dishes were prepared to meet his whims. Even at night he got his mother's attention by crying out that he was afraid, or wanted a drink. His father died when he was four, so played no part in his life. During John's school years his mother again was always trying to protect him from the everyday knocks that most children have the opportunity of experiencing and from which they learn so much.

At the age of seven this boy was wilful and headstrong. Nevertheless, he had made a place for himself with the boys at school, was

fairly efficient at sports, and a leader in his classes. Still, his mother's undue anxiety persisted. She was always afraid he would be hurt at games, would overdo, or that some dread disease would overtake him. Although he was apparently in perfect health, his life was built around the possibilities of illness.

At fourteen he became a real problem, not only at home but at school. He was disobedient, played truant, stole, and if it were not for the social prominence of the family and the influence of friends, he might have fared badly in the courts.

These delinquencies did not last long, for the following year, against the mother's wishes, he was sent away to a boys' school, where he did exceptionally well.

At the end of the spring term of his first year away from home the mother, who had been quite unhappy over her son's absence, suffered a nervous breakdown and insisted on having her boy come home, which he did. There he remained, attending a country day school until he was prepared for college at the age of eighteen.

In due time he entered college, several hundred miles away from home. His freshman year was difficult. He found it hard to get adjusted to the complexities of college life. He missed home and particularly his mother. He wrote and expected daily letters, but he fought a good fight and by the end of his junior year he had made a name for himself in the college.

In the meantime he had fallen in love with a charming, cultured young lady about his age. After spending part of the summer happily with a surveying party, he returned home, where his prospective fiancée made a short visit. His mother received the young lady cordially, but almost as soon as the prospective bride had departed his mother had another nervous breakdown and made her son promise he would not get engaged until he was twenty-five years old—nearly three years away. This culminated in the boy's breaking off his relations with the girl, an act which he has always regretted and for which he holds his mother entirely responsible. Yet he saw no other way out, and even now speaks

in a most reverent way of one's duty toward parents.

After finishing his college course he took a post-graduate course in engineering. Not that he had any particular interest in the work, but he had no plans for the future and no confidence that his college course had prepared him for anything at which he could earn a living. Happily, he soon became interested in the work. He showed more than ordinary ability and during the mid-term of his senior year he was offered an excellent opportunity to begin his practical work in South America immediately after graduation.

He wrote his mother that he had accepted this position, only to hear from one of his older sisters that his mother had fainted upon receiving the news and had been in a state of nervous collapse ever since. The student immediately gave up his position in South America. He became much depressed, failed to attend classes, complained of pain in his back, began to have vomiting attacks, could not sleep, lost weight; and had it not been for his excellent record up to the time of his

breakdown he would not have received his degree.

This sketchy outline of the history of a young man who stands on the brink of failure because he is still dominated by his mother is not an unusual circumstance. The problem of emancipation from the family is one that no man or woman can escape. When this process of freeing one's self from the family fails, the results are pathetic and disastrous.

What can be done in child-training and the education of parents so that the adolescent boy or girl can start out in life unhampered by any unhealthy emotional attachment and crippling dependencies upon parents? What can be done when the child has reached adult years with this immature dependent attitude thwarting him on every side, preventing his making social contacts, limiting his economic efficiency, and spoiling his chance for a happy, well-adjusted married life?

Parents should realize that children are not mere playthings provided for their amusement, to satisfy certain ungratified ambitions in their own lives, and that parental devotion

to the child is no safeguard against poor training. What a difference it might have made to this young student if his mother had realized that her oversolicitous attitude was due in a large part to her efforts to make up for her early resentment; that she was striving to make this child take the place of the father who had died, and that her nervous breakdowns were only unconscious attempts to keep the boy by her side, and later to prevent him from getting married and sharing his love and time with some one else!

The wise parent has learned that in spite of his desire to save the child from paying the price of experience, it is invariably by this method that he learns the most valuable lessons of life. The adolescent is striving for independence, and he cannot get it by allowing himself to be completely under his parents' domination. He must work out many of his problems for himself—or at least must obtain help from some other source than the parents, for it is from them he is trying to emancipate himself. Many parents resent the reserve of the child; they have no respect for his privacy.

They ridicule and treat with contempt the very things that mean most to him—then wonder why they do not get his confidence.

Parents' appreciation of the limitations of their own wisdom is a source of great worry. They live in constant fear that the children will find out the weak spots in their armor. This state of mind leads to a tendency to be dogmatic, self-assertive, and arbitrary.

The effort many adults make to get the confidence of the child, and their horror-stricken attitude when they succeed in ascertaining some of the intimate details of his thoughts, cause much confusion in the mind of the youth. The adult attitude of always being right is also annoying. Youth is quite aware that the parents are judging its conduct by standards that were in vogue several decades ago. Failing to meet the duties and obligations of parenthood by the intellectual approach, fathers and mothers resort to the old-time method of emotional appeal, which eventually results in holding the child in bondage by fetters that cripple and incapacitate. This leads to inevitable failure.

One must keep in mind that when failure occurs as a result of the man's inability to emancipate himself from parents, he is invariably quite unaware of the real cause, and he is likely to attribute his failure to every possible cause but the right one.

A certain business man was worried by a rather distinct personality change that had been obvious in him for about six months. During this period his general attitude toward life had altered completely.

He was just over forty, well developed, and apparently in excellent health. He had always been looked upon as a quiet, reserved, extremely conservative person. He was frugal to stinginess, particularly in his home life. He was rarely absent from his work. He denied himself vacations and plodded along day in and day out. His work and his mother were his principal interests.

Then his mother died, and his attitude toward life underwent a complete change. He became extremely generous, spending money freely on his family and purchasing an automobile. He planned for the education of his

son, which heretofore he had felt was an unnecessary expenditure. He was more sociable, indulging in visits to the theater and other entertainments. In general he was a much more agreeable and friendly person at home and outside.

This man had never been able to free himself from the emotional ties established in early life between himself and his mother. He had always been mother's boy, and up until the time of her death he built his life around her wishes and demands. She was the one person to whom he turned for advice, whose commands he obeyed, to whom he showed any emotional reaction, such as anger or affection. A few years before her death he gave up an excellent opportunity to leave the State and enter business in a much bigger field simply because this would take him away from the immediate environment in which his mother lived, and she refused to make the change.

Whenever he gave his wife presents he made her promise that she would not tell his

mother, who was extremely jealous of his wife. His gifts to his mother were always more expensive than those to his wife.

During his mother's last illness he was constantly at her bedside, and the relief from his maternal bondage came only after her death. He immediately began to overcompensate when freed from her dominating influence. He said, "For the first time in my life that I can remember, I feel free to do as I wish." He was experiencing his first opportunity to be himself, to express his own personality. The necessity of adjusting his life between the duty to his wife and his infantile love for his mother no longer existed.

Resentment against authority is one of the common reasons of failure among young men. It occurs in school, college, in the factory, shop, and office. As one man said whose father had sent him to a psychiatrist after he had had twelve jobs in eight months, "I just fly off the handle every time the boss speaks **to me.**" On further inquiry we found that this young man did his work exceptionally well

and got along satisfactorily with every one except the one in charge of the particular job he was doing.

We are prone to think that most of the trouble with these people is that they have failed to receive proper training and discipline at home. We visualize them as having been permitted to "lord it over" every one in the household, and for that reason find adjustment outside the home difficult or impossible.

Frequently, however, the relationship between the cause and effect in the development of such a personality is not as clearly defined. Many of those individuals who are apparently unable to adjust themselves to situations where they must take orders and be directed, and who become very resentful toward authority, are the products of homes that have been dominated by the stern, forbidding disciplinarian type of father who has driven his children with a stiff rein and cruel bit. Not infrequently his method of discipline has been not only severe but unjust. Often such a father

is compensating for his own feelings of inadequacy that are constantly being brought to the foreground in his daily contacts outside the home. He is the type of person likely to set standards that are usually too high for the normal, active boy to maintain. He meets any and all infringements upon his regulations with drastic measures, so that the only motive for desirable conduct is fear.

It is perfectly obvious that the child striving for his goal of self-confidence, independence, and self-respect could never obtain it under such circumstances. Not only will he develop a strong, instinctive repulsion toward his father, but a resentment against the authority that his father symbolizes.

A person who has failed for this reason may adopt a silent, sullen, resentful attitude toward life; or he may voice his grievances openly. We hear such a one talking about "not getting a square deal," or being "picked upon and persecuted." We often hear him boasting that his superiors have got it in for him because he is "too wise." By inference he would

have one think that the whole moral structure of the business world would totter if he told all he knew.

Contrasted with these two groups just cited are those unfortunate beings whose personalities have been subjected to so much parental dominance that they have become spineless, subdued, wormlike specimens who dare not raise their voices above a whisper. These poor souls become nothing but cogs in a great machine. They are nonentities in the scheme of things. They are tolerated on the one hand with pity and forbearance; on the other hand, with contempt and ridicule. They ask for little and get less.

The boy who has emancipated himself from his parents, who has confidence in his own judgment, who is not afraid of accepting the responsibility of making his decisions, has a much better chance of avoiding vocational mistakes than the one who, because of his dependence on others, drifts aimlessly into medicine, law, the factory, or office simply because his father preceded him in one of these vocational pursuits, or perhaps for some less

adequate reason. Many such failures would be avoided if parents would only discard their preconceived ideas of what they are going to make out of their children and give more thought to the material with which they have to deal and how it can best be developed.

What can be done for the individual who is standing on the brink of that abyss called failure? Not the failure of the day, or the year, or the failure to accomplish some particular thing or to reach some coveted goal, but the failure that culminates in a life of unhappiness and inefficiency, that reaches back to one's earliest recollections and ahead as far as one dares to look. It represents a personality so twisted and warped (in the particular group of cases we are discussing) by these unhappy parental relationships, that only through the intervention of some outside force can the individual hope to compete with life successfully. Failures due to unhappy relationships between child and parent can be prevented by outside advice more easily than they can later be cured. The same principles that are being applied to the prevention of

disease and the prevention of crime could be applied to the prevention of human failures.

Later the school, which represents the one great mill through which a large percentage of the population must pass, is in a position to recognize many of these potential failures. With the present system of visiting nurses and that most excellent organization called the Parent-Teacher Association, a closer study and better understanding of the child should be attained. The understanding and interested teacher is in a position to recognize the emotional conflicts that exist between child and parent. Parents should coöperate and try to compete with teachers. Their objective should be identical—that is, the development of the child as a physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual being.

The same spirit of coöperation should be carried on when the boy reaches college. The great American universities that have concerned themselves primarily with the intellectual side of the student's life are now becoming more and more concerned with his emotional life. In many instances a full-time

psychiatrist is appointed to the faculty to study the causes of failure. Experience has shown that the emotional conflicts that have centered around the unhappy and unhealthy relationship between parent and child stand out in the foreground.

Industry is also recognizing the fact that failure is frequently preventable and often curable. In many of the largest industrial enterprises in this country the principles of psychiatry are being introduced. Specialists in all branches of medicine are being utilized, and the psychiatrist is among them. Many of the individuals who are suffering from ideas of their own inferiority, who are bitter and resentful toward authority, who are pugnacious and domineering toward those under their supervision, will find the answer to their problem in the office of the psychiatrist.

The above suggestions are practical for the individual who is failing, or suffering from a sense of failure, who happens to live in one of the larger communities, or who is part of an industrial or educational system that recognizes emotional conflicts as a factor in failure.

Here we can be sure that the psychiatric approach, whether it be in the college or factory, or the physician's private office, will be utilized, and that such an approach will be an intelligent one and the one most likely to be of value, for the patient will be assured that he will not be looked upon as merely a system of organs, but as an individual who is failing to adjust himself in an adequate way to his environment.

His failure will be interpreted in terms of his past experience, and an effort will be made to show him just how certain of these experiences have worked out to his disadvantage and how certain attitudes developed at the time of these initial experiences have been carried over in his emotional life and unconsciously utilized to his disadvantage.

But if it happens that the individual lives in some isolated community where the specialist in these problems of human relationship is not available, what then is the answer to his problem? Shall he plod along, attempting to battle with these unforeseen forces that are contributing to his failure, or can he hope for

assistance other than from the well-trained specialist?

Under such conditions I would advise that he seek some man of wisdom—it may be the family physician, a friend whom he admires and whose judgment he respects, perhaps a minister or teacher who is reputed to have breadth of vision and whom he knows to be handling his own affairs wisely. Pick out a man's man, then openly and frankly lay before him the problem.

The chances are that one of these men of wisdom will give him better insight into the forces that have contributed to his failure than he has ever had heretofore. If the problem can be presented as it actually exists, the solution is much less difficult, and the very fact that the problems of human adjustment are so much a part of us is the very reason we must get the objective view and guidance from outside in our efforts to solve them.

THE FIRST JOB

Many men and women have been fired from their first jobs, only to achieve later success. The important thing is not to despair, but to realize the cause of failure and overcome it.

BY

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CHAPTER II

THE FIRST JOB

NO one need be discouraged because he has failed in his first job. Failure may be due to circumstances for which he is not responsible, to faults in his character which he can correct, or simply to the fact that he has undertaken something for which he was not fitted.

A certain New York woman who, when she retired recently, was making a salary well over \$25,000 a year, was fired from her first position for incompetence. The sum that she wasn't considered capable of earning at that time was \$6 a week.

Another American woman, now being paid \$90,000 a year as vice-president of a big manufacturing company, failed at her first undertaking—that of farming.

Edward H. Harriman, one of our country's greatest railroad financiers, did not rise from comparative obscurity to national em-

inence until he was well past middle life. In his first position, that of a Wall Street clerk, he gave little indication of ability.

Pasteur had to fail at portrait painting before he became a great scientist.

One of our most successful short-story writers was fired by his first boss; he himself acknowledges that he was probably the youngest and undoubtedly the most incompetent managing editor in the United States.

If unfavorable circumstances are the cause of failure in the first job, the great necessity is to recognize the circumstances and either change them or rise above them—not simply to use them as an eternal alibi. A certain young lawyer entering a large law firm was given by his older associates all the cases that were destined to be lost and all the disagreeable and hard tasks that no one else wanted to take on. His first few years in that office were full of discouragement and defeat, so that he became pessimistic, lost confidence in himself, and decided that he would never make a good lawyer. As a result he gave up law and took up teaching, for which he had

no training and in which he has been a failure. He had been beaten by circumstance.

If this man had stopped to reason from time to time in his early career, he would have realized that difficult tasks when faithfully done are most truly stepping-stones to success. If he had talked over with his elders the discouragement of his lost cases he would have learned that the worth-while things of life and of the practice of law do not often come easily, and that frequently the most valuable lessons of life are defeats. The things that stick with us longest are those that have made the deepest impression on our brains, and the correct answer to a question we once failed on may be the knowledge longest retained. Had this young man remained in the practice of law, successes were soon bound to come and then difficult tasks would have seemed easier and the earlier schooling in defeat would have built up a resistance to all hardship, for he was trained for law, he liked the profession, and possessed many qualities fitting him for it.

But not all failures may be blamed on out-

side factors. The young man or woman tackling the world at the end of a college or high-school course carries the causes of many defeats hidden within his own character, his training or his mental make-up. If he can face these weaknesses he can often conquer them.

Is he, for instance, willing and able to take responsibility? Owen Young, who has risen with dizzy speed to the top of the commercial ladder, ascribes his success to his constant willingness to accept responsibility. Certain persons always shirk difficult situations, and are able to avoid them because they have been encouraged to do so by overindulgent parents or unthinking teachers, until "getting from under" has become a habit with them.

Or perhaps they lack persistence—that mental quality which causes us to follow through and complete a task rather than try to take short cuts or drop one task in favor of a more attractive one.

A certain young man I have in mind was a good example of how men fail not only in their first but in later jobs because he lacked both these traits—persistence and willingness

to take responsibility. His parents were divorced and he had been brought up by an overindulgent mother, who herself always avoided difficult decisions and disagreeable tasks. The young mind is extremely imitative, and it did not take this boy long to learn how to dodge responsibility and choose the easiest paths. When he took his first position he found his boss a great stickler for being on time in the morning and staying until closing time at night. This he found most disagreeable. He was frequently late on the job, always giving his boss a plausible excuse and expecting to be forgiven as he had always been by his mother for sins of omission.

When the boss would not condone such conduct the young man resigned his position and justified his action by saying that no one could be expected to work for such an unreasonable person. Later he took another position, and here it was found that he never completed the assignments of work allotted to him. He would start off with a dash and appear to be doing good work, only to drop the task half completed and take up some other

more agreeable line of activity. This again resulted in loss of his position, and now the boy is practically an object of charity, but always justifying his loss of a job by blaming the responsibility on the other fellow.

One of the principal reasons for failure in youth is that young people are often controlled by their emotions rather than by their reason. Of course, adolescence is a time when emotions are naturally in the saddle, but it is a great mistake to let them guide us to our life-work when a little intelligent thought on our own part or on the part of those who are advising us would point in another direction.

Emotion is guiding Philip, for instance, when he wants to be a lawyer because two generations before him have been lawyers, although he himself has no qualifications for that profession; and emotion is guiding Margaret when she wants to be a social worker because she feels that in this field there is a great opportunity for helping the downtrodden to adjust themselves to their difficulties, although, regarding *herself* as downtrodden, she has never been able to settle her own prob-

lems. And emotion is guiding Mabel when she accepts an attractive invitation which will keep her from work for a day, without stopping to reason that the excuse she gives for being away from the office is bound to be detected and lead to her discharge.

How can we overcome this tendency to react emotionally?—for overcoming it is sure to add to our chances for success. The answer is: By training ourselves to reason. When it becomes necessary for us to make a decision we can stop and ask ourselves, "Am I planning to do this simply because I want to, or because, the facts being so-and-so, it is the wisest thing for me to do?"

I know a young man whose first job was selling insurance. He had never thought out his problems, and so when he started his work and visited a few prospects who did not buy, he reacted emotionally, became discouraged, made no more calls, and thus did not produce. This youth, thinking with his feelings instead of his reason, said, "Selling life insurance is slow starvation," and gave it up. If this boy had reasoned from the facts, that one's sales

in insurance are in a definite proportion to the prospects seen, he would have had courage to keep on and so not encounter defeat at the beginning of his career.

Many young people are endowed with good minds, have a sense of responsibility, a willingness to follow through, and endeavor to reason out their problems, but fail because they have never taken a wholesome interest in the human beings about them. We speak of such people as socially maladjusted. This type of maladjustment is a frequent cause of failure, because no matter how good a young person's intellect, how patient and persistent he is, or how well he masters the details of his job, if he cannot get on with those with whom he works, if he has not learned social give and take, there are very, very few jobs that he can either get or hold. In other words, he must have thought over the viewpoint of the other fellow; he must have learned to be an active part of the group in which he lives and does his work or play. He must be able to live with other people pleasantly and comfortably, or else he will fail sooner or later. More, and

frequently better, business is done on the golf course than in the conference room.

I once knew a boy who was a pathetic example of social maladjustment. He went through high school near the head of his class, but spent all of his time in study, none in play—never went out with boys and girls. When he took his first job he found he had to work with many others who expected him to share in their interests, to talk their language—in other words, to be one of them. He could not do this, so he soon found himself an outcast. He worried about his situation, but did not know what to do about it; then he began to lose sleep and became unable to concentrate on his work. When a verbal order was passed on through the office he seldom got it, because the other workers were almost oblivious of his existence—felt he was not one of them. So he was charged with neglect of duties, because he had not heard from the others what was expected in certain situations.

As time went on he sank deeper and deeper into his social isolation, and to this was soon added the sense of defeat when he lost his

position. He became depressed and went through a long period of mental ill health.

This young man's handicap had its origin in the faulty mental hygiene of childhood and should have been corrected then by parents and teachers. The tendency to seclusiveness, instead of being condoned, should have been redirected by teaching the joy of group activity, by bringing companions into the home, and by providing amusements that must depend upon the association with others. This anti-social trend is most often the result of the individual's feeling of insecurity or inferiority, sometimes because of real or fancied physical inefficiency such as lack of good muscular coördination, speech defects or slight deformities, or because of mental inadequacies—for example, fears or difficulty in making decisions.

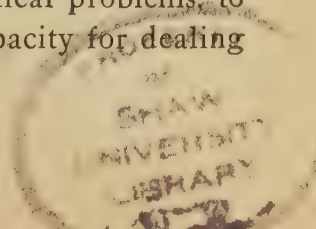
Such problems can largely be overcome if parents would only take the trouble to study the situation, help their children to retrain awkward muscles, surmount fears, and form decisions. Some defects such as deformities, obviously cannot be removed; but here again

their handicapping effect can largely be remedied if the elders will only explain the great accomplishments of men and women made in the face of bodily illness. Take, for example, Elizabeth Barrett Browning: her achievements in spite of "lung affection" and later spinal disease are well known to all.

Let us then learn to know our children and help them to know themselves. Let us teach the joy as well as the necessity of playing and working with others. Facing reality and climbing to success over the rough crags of seemingly mountainous difficulties makes of life a tremendously worth-while adventure.

Far too great a number of early failures are due almost wholly to the choosing of the wrong vocation; not that we have any accurate scientific measure of what each man should do, but we do know that certain men are better adapted to jobs in which inanimate objects are dealt with than positions which call for the handling of other human beings.

Psychological tests are employed to determine abilities with arithmetical problems, to estimate the individual's capacity for dealing



with a baffling situation, for estimating the development of auditory or visual memory, and for proficiency in completing a task. These tests are given in many schools and colleges. Of themselves they do not tell whether a boy should be a teacher of arithmetic or a plumber, but taken together with the person's likes and dislikes and with his progress in learning the various tasks, they do serve as an index for vocational selection and may often help a boy or girl to determine whether he should be an interior decorator or an expert accountant, with a somewhat greater degree of accuracy than by leaving it merely to the individual's desire.

We also know that certain individuals can assume only a small amount of real responsibility; therefore, if one of these individuals, because of his faithfulness, is promoted from the teller's cage of a bank to a position of much greater responsibility, he will probably fail, unless the transition be made very gradually.

I am thinking of a young man who illustrated this point. Even as a child he had a

great love for mechanics; he was always reconstructing his mechanical toys, tinkering with his father's automobile, and building radio sets. But his mother felt that mechanical things were very dull and that mechanical positions were not as dignified as others. Therefore, he was urged to take a business training leading to a position as certified public accountant. He did badly in the course, but his teacher permitted him to go on and his mother insisted on his getting a position in this work.

On the job he was inattentive, showed no initiative, and was unhappy. He lost one position after the other. Finally a wise family physician, who understands something about men and their abilities, urged the boy to take a job as brakeman on a railroad. The mother was horrified at this, but the wise family doctor insisted upon it, and very soon the boy was happy in his work. Later he took night courses and became an engineer. Recently he has made an invention which is of the greatest importance to the railroads.

One great reason for failure in the first job

is that in almost the majority of cases it is not chosen but just fallen into. Many thousands of boys and girls finish their education without forming the faintest idea what they want to take up as a life-work. This is true of more than half of our college graduates.

In the last few years much has been done, both in high school and college, toward vocational guidance. Those directing such work through their knowledge of the result of psychological tests and their understanding of personality have helped many to start in a job for which they had a real interest.

In spite of this directed effort to place people in suitable jobs, there are still far too many young people who take the first opportunity that presents itself which offers a degree of economic security, and continue along in these careers whether they are happy in them or not, because they never have the courage to venture for even a brief time away from economic security into the chance of making good in a new type of work.

This is a great mistake. If you will study the lives of our great men to-day you will

find that a large proportion of them have made their successes in some line other than the one in which they began. They are the men who had the courage and the initiative to take their lives in their hands and execute an about-face when they found themselves going in the wrong direction, even if it took their last dollar to do so.

Courage and initiative are those qualities of personality learned by boys and girls in the classroom, on the play-field, and in the home. They come from being trained and from schooling one's self to accept defeat on the ball-field and yet face the next game with the will to conquer and the belief it can be done. They are taught by the example and attitude of parents and teachers and learned by reasoning from experience. Such young people come from failure in a recitation and yet attack the next lesson with a determination to master. Baseball fans of a quarter century ago will remember Edward Morgan Lewis. After several successful years at professional ball he went in for higher education and proved his mastery of his new profession when he was

elected dean of the Massachusetts Agricultural College.

Even in the early years of school we should try to understand our abilities and disabilities, to think over the problem of life rather seriously from the point of view of the opportunities it offers, endeavor to see in some of these opportunities something for which we have some aptitude, as well as some interest; get the best training we can, and when that adventure of life, the first job, is entered into, we should try to realize that this is the proving-ground, that we may advance far in this particular job if we avoid the pitfalls I have described above. But we should also have the courage to change our job, even when such change results in a lower salary, if we see in other work something we are sure we are better fitted for and will be happier in.

Men's failures are seldom the result of one single factor. They are far more often the result of various factors, some of which are the results of faulty early training, some coming from the individual's own encouragement of a tendency to fly from reality rather than to

face it, that mental trend fostered in childhood that leads the individual to escape from hard tasks by indulging in day-dream or fantasy. It is the flight from reality that leads the hard-worked office boy with his humdrum tasks to dream of himself as the great home-run hitter, drawing a salary of \$70,000 a year and riding around in high-powered motors. Not that we don't all have our day-dreams and profit by these imaginative flights; but it is when we use them constantly as our escape from disagreeable tasks and when they become an habitual alibi that they unfit us for life's work. And some fail from the fact that a round peg is obviously trying to fit itself into a square hole, like an earnest student and ardent lover of modern languages I know, who is failing as a furniture salesman because he hates it and is doing it only because a domineering father insists on the son's learning the family business.

Unhappiness, mediocrity, and failure would at times be obviated if employers would orient their employees when they start their first job. At this time some direction about the

nature and purpose of the work, some explanation of the difficulties and a few hints as to method of approaching the task, may be the determinant of success or failure. Not that spoon-feeding at this stage is to be encouraged; but the employer should not forget that many a good race-horse has been taken to a well-built race-track, but spoiled by crude training methods. It has been determined that the majority of flying accidents are due not to faulty planes but to lack of more training of the aviator or to personality defects in the fliers. Proper selection of human material for jobs and proper training in the work cannot be too strongly emphasized.

Looking at the problem of life frankly, we realize that it is a matter of many adjustments. The human mechanism is constantly being called upon to make such adjustments, some of them so simple that we make them automatically—such as the adjustment that the body makes when we climb a steep hill, in the faster breathing and the increased pulse rate, or the wearing of warmer clothes in cold weather, or refraining from a hearty meal

just before we are going to take strenuous exercise.

But other adjustments are more subtle. They lie in the control of our emotions, in the ability to face the realities of a situation rather than to wrap ourselves in cotton wool and find ourselves in a world of fantasy, in learning how to live with people by actual experience in doing so rather than by simply reading about it in books. The ability to make these adjustments while we are in the formative years means the ability to succeed in our life job—and the lack of it usually spells mediocrity or failure.

SEX HAS THROWN A BOMB INTO BUSINESS

The daily proximity of thousands of men and women in offices and shops has introduced new complications and causes of failure that hardly existed fifty years ago.

BY

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CHAPTER III

SEX HAS THROWN A BOMB INTO BUSINESS

A DISTRACTING element has entered American business which was not there fifty years ago—or rather it was present in such small quantities as to be almost unnoticeable as a disturbing factor in man's destiny.

That new TNT, of course, is woman. Men of an older generation did not have the air mail or the Federal reserve bank to help them put over bigger and better business deals on one another, but they did have comparative freedom during office hours from the distracting presence of women and all that it might imply. Though only yesterday, it seems, the queen was in her garden eating bread and honey—when she wasn't at the washtub or the sink—to-day she swarms into the counting-house, anxious and willing to handle the cash.

Much printer's ink has been wasted dis-

cussing woman's effect on politics, which so far has been negligible—at least on other than the Road to Rome. But relatively little has been said about woman's effect on business, which has been tremendous. That this, as well as many another issue, has not been more fully realized is largely due to the fact that it is an old trick of the human mind to cover up the most important things in life by thrusting forward the less important, and also to our unwillingness to recognize that success or failure in life is due much more to our emotional equipment than to what we proudly and pretentiously call our intellect.

Two or three years ago the newspapers carried an item about a pretty English stenographer who had been engaged, in turn, to every member of the law firm for which she worked, and had ended by marrying the senior partner. It takes no great imagination to picture the amount of effective work done—or rather not done—during this period of competitive courtships. Fortunately for the future of the bar, such seductive titbits are rare, but it is nevertheless true that a woman

can be a fatally disrupting force in an office full of men if the psychological possibilities of the situation are not understood and properly met.

By this I do not imply that all women are "vamps," or that they should be immediately hustled out of every office. The great majority of them ask only to be allowed to go about their legitimate business, and they have as much right to do so as the men. The psychological results of this new situation in the business world—that of so many women and men working all day in close proximity—are far more complicated than just the question of separating honey from the cashbox. They strike at the roots of character and demand attention from all men who want to avoid what seems to them inexplicable failure in middle life.

Year by year numerous examples of inefficient men come to my notice; I do not here refer to those of the consultation room alone, for, paradoxical as it may appear, apart from a small proportion of those malignantly ill, in the consultation room of the neuro-

psychiatrist may be encountered, numerically speaking, the least sick of the community.

The sicker members of the business group are the self-satisfied ones on whom it never dawns that anything is the matter with their mental machinery. These citizens rise betimes, thump their chests, eat their raisins, bran, or yeast-cake, take their various "laxatives," post-mortem their golf scores, and boast about their speculations. When, at the age of forty or thereabouts, they either fail irrevocably or simply drop back in the procession and go on with a chronic discontent and steadily diminishing abilities, all the world wonders.

Many such failures, as well as an even larger group of men and women who fall by the wayside before they reach the age of forty, do so because their faulty use of the love principle in life—the creative principle—has caught them at various stages of their progress and ditched them. The manifestations of side-tracking the love principle—that is, the instinct for race continuance—appear in many disguised forms, not by any means easily

recognizable. One of the commonest types, whose appearance is an outcome of, or is emphasized by, woman's entry into business, and which leads frequently but insidiously to business failure, is sex prejudice. This is an expression of that antagonism which exists between men and women in business, but which, since men have always felt they should have the upper hand, is most commonly seen operating against women.

The desire to dominate, and its practical development, though not by any means an exclusive male attribute, nevertheless is felt as a manifest prerogative. He belongs! In all his relations with woman he wants, and unconsciously seeks, a sense of power. Wherever he opposes any extension of feminine liberty he does so because he feels that this special right of might is thereby threatened. Sex prejudice is always born of fear.

How man's fear has caused *women* to fail in business is obvious. Except in some lines where a feminine point of view gives a woman a distinct advantage, she is rarely given a job unless she is *better* than any available man.

This situation and how she may meet it is discussed in detail in another chapter of this book.

That sex prejudice may cause men themselves to fail is just as true, although not so obvious. As women reach higher positions in the world of business, there will be more men assistants to women executives. Thus the man whose sex fear makes him unable to work loyally under a woman often finds his way to advancement blocked.

But this is not the most important way that sex prejudice hurts a man. The greatest danger comes to the fiber of his own personality, his character. Although he may not be—indeed, often is not—conscious that he is possessed by this type of fear, the unconscious working of it hampers him at every turn and raises a multitude of anxieties which inhibit the full play of his mental powers. Sex prejudices, like other forms of prejudice, close his mind, make him unable to evaluate correctly suggestions which come to him from women or which concern women, make him self-conscious and irritable and limit his

productive imagination. The offices of America are choked with potential failures who do not know that sex prejudice is the carbon that is clogging their mental cylinders.

I recall the case of Mr. B. On the sudden death of his father he inherited the control of an advertising firm. The success of this company, whose biggest accounts centered around products made especially to appeal to women—perfumes, soaps, household appliances—was largely due to an able woman copy-writer who had been with them for many years and whom the older man, openly welcoming her ability, had steadily advanced. But young B. had a deeply rooted unconscious sex fear against women in business, an attitude which was probably accentuated against this particular woman because of her keener and quicker mind and her greater experience. Although he could have learned a great deal from her and would have been willing to do so had she been a he-man, he began instead to harry her. On one pretext or another he took some of the larger accounts away from her and gave them to a man whose

chief alibi was that he played a good game of golf. He advanced men over the head of the woman copy-writer and unconsciously resisted any suggestions she made to him, rationalizing this prejudice to himself by a score of devices, i. e., passing the buck.

The end of this story is short, sad, and simple. Several of his big accounts, dissatisfied with the less able handling of their copy, withdrew their business. The promising enterprise which Mr. B. had inherited failed, and in middle life he was left to start again. The woman copy-writer, whose reputation in the advertising world far exceeded his own, and who had stayed with him only from a sense of loyalty to the father, was grabbed up by another firm—at twice her former salary—and departed thence, trailing her former accounts behind her like a cloud of glory.

This is not an isolated case; on perhaps a less spectacular scale it is being duplicated in hundreds of offices. Its mainsprings lie not only in man's faulty understanding of what real power is, but are caused, in individual cases, by twisted patterns of training in the

home life. From the psychoanalytic point of view, many a man unconsciously resents the fact that he has ever been forced to grow up and leave the protection of his home and his mother's intimate care. Because of his real love of being dependent, such an individual harbors unconscious grudges. He decides to get revenge on his mother and takes it out on any woman whom he can treat in his own mind as a substitute of the mother, and who finds herself in a position subordinate to him. This woman therefore serves as a substitute pattern of the mother who has babied him and thus earned his resentment.

The important thing to remember in any discussion of the mental abilities of men and women is not that the mind of one sex is "superior," "inferior," or "equal" to the other—psychologists have long since discarded those ideas—but that their mental and emotional equipments are *complementary*, as are the lock and the key. Man's tendency is to be more intellectualistic in arriving at conclusions; woman uses more feeling. Both reach the same goal, but by different routes. This is

why the woman's point of view in business should be made a definite asset, because it supplements and complements the man's. Her intuitive sense is especially valuable when it comes to sizing up people, because at that she is an adept, since her success for millions of years had depended on it.

Moreover, the man who scorns a feminine method of thinking should, to be consistent, go through his organization and weed out a good many of the trousers-wearers also. Feminine minds are not always concealed in feminine bodies; they may be associated with fierce beards and broad shoulders, just as the mental machinery more common to men often lurks behind graceful contours and peachlike complexions. It is a comic strip idea, with no more truth than the comic strip usually has, that the masculine-thinking female must of necessity be flat of chest and narrow of hip.

The way for women to meet sex prejudice in business is not to combat it but to recognize its existence and meet it tactfully. It is not found now in the broader type of men. Really big men recognize the ability of

women and work with them without sex-consciousness. But where it still exists it has to be reckoned with.

I recall one woman who has met it with special success. Her personality and unusual ability in a firm catering to women has raised her to the position of its vice-president. Once in her search for a new sales manager, she offered the position to an able man who had succeeded in a similar line. He was pleased, for it meant a big promotion, but he hesitated to accept and finally confessed that he did not know how he would like working under a woman.

"How would you like to work *with* a woman?" was the reply.

That, he felt, would be all right. Well, that, he was assured, was all that it amounted to. He took the job.

Men may prevent failure arising from sex prejudice by asking themselves honestly, in all their business relations with women, "in doing or saying what I am planning to do, am I really actuated by unconscious prejudices? What would I think of this idea if it had been

proposed by a man? Am I allowing wish-fulfilling rationalizations to pull me around by the nose, or am I thinking and feeling squarely?"

Sex prejudice, as I have said before, is rooted in fear, and not all men can throw it aside, by this or any other method, but to be able to do so is one of the marks of a great executive.

More obvious than sex prejudice, but no less deadly as a cause of business failures, is sex allure. Since men and women have been forced to work so closely together it has disrupted many an office. For this reason many men will not employ a pretty secretary. They are either afraid of their wives or of their own weakness or of what their associates will think of them. Sometimes, although perfectly free of any inclination toward a good-looking assistant, they are made self-conscious and hampered in their work by the unfounded jealousy of their mates. While it is normal for men and women who meet in offices, or elsewhere, to marry, men should be on their guard when employing women of the type of

the stenographer whose amatory adventures I have already described.

Nor are the disadvantages all on the man's side. Many a pretty but capable bookkeeper has had to resign one position after another because her employer persisted in watching her figure rather than her figures. Such women sometimes find their best opportunities for realizing their ambitions in working for other women or in lines of employment, such as selling, which bring them into passing contact with a great many people rather than close contact with a few, so that beauty and personality become assets in the struggle for *self-preservation*, rather than a continual hindrance by their appeal to the instinct of the other sex for *race continuance*. I have in mind an extremely pretty young woman of my acquaintance who has just been forced to resign from what promised to be a good position because one of the partners fell in love with her and aroused such a thorough rivalry, rationalized as contempt, in his associate that the firm threatened to dissolve.

Hand-me-down standards arising from sex

differences injure the efficiency of both men and women in another way. Chivalry in the Middle Ages was man's method of protecting the family from the primitive expression of his own instincts, but in business relations it stifles healthy rivalry and prevents growth. The woman whose boss will not tell her the truth about her work because she is a woman is not getting a square deal, and the office morale is suffering with her.

But business failures traceable to sex differences are by no means confined to the difficulties arising from close association of men and women in business offices. The roots of many of the failures in business go back much farther, even into babyhood. To this group, for instance, belong those failures whose characters have been warped by the unhappy love-life of their parents. A child absorbs the unhappiness around him as a pat of butter absorbs the flavors of the icebox, and unhappiness in married life boils down, in the main, to maladjusted sex situations. A youngster brought up in such an atmosphere cannot

help reflecting it in his character and his later attitude toward life.

What the growing child must have to succeed is love—of the right kind. Our penitentiaries and asylums reëcho to the misery of men and women who either had no real love in their childhood or whose love has been directed toward unworthy objects. Herein lies one of the chief causes of crime—and one of the chief means of preventing it.

One of the first things a child does is to direct his love to those around him, because they supply his necessary pleasures. One of the next things he does is try to imitate these love objects, since it is the nature of all of us consciously or unconsciously to imitate those we love. Not only do we imitate the loved ones; we actually take them over as parts of our personalities and identify ourselves with them, trying to act and feel as they do. This is the beginning of *conscience*, which in the beginning is simply the voice within us of the beloved person. If the original object of our love, usually mother or father, was a worthy

one, we have a good conscience, because we have taken to ourselves a good pattern.

An unwanted, unloved child has no one with whom to identify himself. A child who grows up surrounded by criminals has only unworthy patterns. We see men and women in this class committing the most atrocious crimes without, apparently, the slightest twinge of conscience. The truth is that such a person may have a conscience but it councils for evil rather than good.

The implications of this are obvious. "Do as I say, not as I do," is an attitude which may lead to failure for the child thus taught. Several years ago I had an experience which illustrates how a good conscience, temporarily unheeded, may be tossed to one about to fail in business, like a rope to the drowning, and rescue to honor and success.

A young lawyer was brought to me by his physician. He was haggard and worn from many sleepless nights, smoked continually, fidgeted, was restless and agitated. From his plunging, broken, and almost disconnected sentences, I learned that he could not eat,

could not sleep—was, in fact, on the edge of a nervous breakdown. After an untouched breakfast he would reach his office by 7 or 8, work distractedly over a host of details, dash out to sit on a lunch stool, gulp a cup of coffee, and dash back, to work much and accomplish little, his mind and his behavior disordered and ineffective. He had come to the conclusion that he must be “going nutty.”

He was young, and I learned that he had been associated for a few years with a much older lawyer. The chief bulk of their work dealt with caring for a comparatively few very old estates. The original owners of these estates had been dead many years, and their numerous boxes of papers held a series of documents involving many millions of dollars, with interminably complicated ramifications of properties and stocks and bonds, the income from which it was his business to distribute to many legatees. He and the other lawyer were the only two persons who really knew and understood what these estates were worth.

This young man had worked happily and

conscientiously while in association with his older friend and semi-partner. Then the older lawyer suddenly died, and to the young man was left the task of managing the details of these estates, of which no one but himself now had even an inkling.

It was immediately after this that his troubles began.

I surmised from what he did not say what was the matter; he was tempted to appropriate what he knew would never be missed, although he could not consciously admit this temptation. Unconsciously, however, *something* knew it, and the nervousness, lack of appetite, and broken condition were the efforts in the unconscious to warn him against unworthy desires.

With the precipitancy of youth—I would go about it more carefully in the light of my later experience—I suddenly shot at him this question: “What is your temptation?”

The rush of rage that purpled his face, the clenched fists and outbursts of abusive language, told me I had hit the nail on the head—as well as made a violent enemy not only

of the patient but of the physician who had brought him to me. He stormed out of my office, would be damned if he would ever pay his consultation fee, abused his physician for ever bringing him to such a shyster. Thus the matter ended.

No, not quite; I learned the sequel ten years later when a certain other patient came to consult me. This man told me that he had been referred to me by a "Mr. X." I had no recollection of any Mr. X.

"Well," said the patient, "he told me to come to see you. Said he talked with you ten years ago and you saved his life and reputation."

When I looked up my records later I discovered that "Mr. X" was my young lawyer. I had often wondered what had happened to him; now I knew.

He had not been a failure. But how preciously near he had come to being one! I had not allayed the conflict in his mind, but I had bolstered up his conscience to resist temptation by a few minutes' interlude in my examination of him, when I had discussed with

him his family, consisting of a widowed mother and two fine young sisters just about to be married. Whereas he had stressed what the breakdown in his *health* might mean to them, I had manoeuvred to show what the breakdown in his *honor* might mean, and knew from the sobering effect of my few questions and statements that I was warm, for he had a sincere, deep affection for these love objects of his home. He could not betray them.

This, then, was an example of failure averted because the early love objects had been of the right sort. The young man's mother had never silver-spooned him. The sisters had never grafted. They had kept their self-respect by working themselves, and had kept his respect for them. They had given him a good conscience and no excuse for failure.

In contrast to this young man, who had affection from his family of the right, constructive sort, the world is cluttered up with "mama's boys" who have been petted into failure. Sometimes they are the only children

or the only sons. Their misdeeds are always forgiven; they learn to expect lenience, to make excuses, to shirk responsibilities. They are kept in a protected, infantile frame of mind. When they go out into the business world they expect this toleration to continue. If the boss calls them down, they sulk; he's an "old grouch," "unreasonable"; "the fellows who make good have just got there by pull"; "no self-respecting man would stand for it." When things don't go just as they wish, the mama's boys won't play—that is, they quit the job.

Extremes of this case need a psychiatrist to pull them out of the slough into which they have fallen. Emotionally they have never grown up. The future of the race demands that at adolescence the boy should shift his affections from their concentration on his mother and family and direct them toward a future mate, developing at the same time those qualities of independence and pugnaciousness which will enable him to care for and protect a family. He must learn to meet difficulties standing up, not to make excuses

and run away from them. His reactions, his methods of getting what he wants, must be grown up, not infantile. Obviously the place for him to learn these things is at home, and the person best fitted to teach him is his mother. But by keeping him too closely under her domination she is, metaphorically speaking, refusing to cut his curls. She is using the love principle to cripple him rather than to infuse him with energy.

The normal man's choice of love objects after he has emancipated himself from his family is closely bound up with his success or failure in business, for the bankruptcies that may be traced to unhappy marriages are legion. This whole subject, however, properly belongs in a consideration of the failure of marriage, one aspect of which is discussed in the next chapter of this book.

WIVES WHO HELP THEIR HUSBANDS TO FAIL

The jealous wife, the "invalid," the clinging vine, the wife who lacks faith in her husband, the wife with superior abilities, the wife who has married a "father substitute"—all these are conspicuous causes of masculine failure.

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CHAPTER IV

WIVES WHO HELP THEIR HUSBANDS TO FAIL

ANY specialist in platitudes; lunch-club orator, newspaper syndicate poet, or leader of a "popular psychology" course, can be persuaded with scant coaxing to inform a receptive world just why it is that men fail in life. If failure is not due to an inadequate "spirit of service and coöperation," then it must be caused by a "lack of faith." And if perchance neither of these seems plausible, it is no trick at all to throw the blame onto insufficient "pep" and an absence of the instinct of the "go-getter."

Unfortunately for the man who is a failure, beaten, broken and discouraged, there is meager comfort to be extracted from platitudes. What he needs is less glowing generalities and more cold, specific facts, if he is to

stage a successful come-back, or if he is to help others avoid the pitfalls that engulfed him.

Among the specific causes for failure in life, certain types of wives stand well toward the top of the list. Not all wives, by any means, but certain ones; the wife, for example, who, being aware of an intellectual or a cultural disparity between her endowments and those of her husband, consequently is jealous of the factors that have contributed to his success. Not a few men have been prevented from accomplishing what potentially they were capable of, because they sincerely loved a wife of this kind. Jealousy need not express itself solely in terms of hatred against some individual whom we suspect of weaning from us the affections of a loved one. An occupation, a hobby, a special interest may become the object of just as malignant a jealousy as ever was aroused against the passing fancy of a philandering husband.

Jealousy, as viewed by the psychiatrist, is primarily the admission of a feeling of inferiority on the part of the person who displays

it. This feeling of inferiority may or may not be justified by the facts of the case, but for several reasons the persons who experience it are unsure of the invincibility of their own equipments of personality, good looks or intelligence, especially if it comes to the necessity for testing these against a competitor. Interlocked also with jealousy is usually found a frustration of the determination each human being has to dominate or to exert power over some other person. Thus, the jealous individual, because of an inadequacy or a mismanagement of part of his psychological equipment, has been unable to control, as much as he would like, some one else whose interests or affections have become important or essential to his well-being. When this urge to dominate has been thwarted in one attempt, it is human nature not to give up but to seek success in another venture and with different weapons.

It would be a mistake, however, to regard this so-called "will to power" as always undesirable. To some extent every one of us, every day, has numerous of his actions mo-

tivated by this device, technically known as a "mental mechanism." None of us is wholly immune to its appeal, and reasonably used it helps in the legitimate promotion of our self-confidence and our advancement in life.

Symptoms of "Illness" as Weapons

The wife, however, who secretly is burdened with a conviction of inferiority that makes her dubious of her hold on her husband, senses, in various of his interests outside the home, a threat to that hold. She may herself be without average business acumen and yet resent his facility at managing complicated affairs at the office. She may possess a shy and difficult personality in contrast to his buoyant, affable one, and in consequence dislike to meet new people or attend social functions. In such instances she also is apt to dislike her husband's popularity, because its very success symbolizes something she has not been enabled to parallel.

So it happens that a wife of this kind (and they are not few), thwarted in her determina-

tion to wield power by conventional means, resorts consciously or unconsciously to an age-old device of the weak. She realizes—perhaps from childhood experience, perhaps by instinct—that in the struggle for power the strong get their own way by force, while the weak obtain it by strategy. So, the jealousy of her husband's friends and activities apparently is dispelled, for she has seen that it is unsuitable to meet her needs. In its place she substitutes the use of disease symptoms as instruments in the warfare, and with these success at last is attained. Assuming that the husband sincerely loves her, a wife of the kind under dissection has an infallible weapon in symptoms of "heart disease," "nervousness," gastric disorders, and literally a hundred and one other forms of physical complaints. By means of them she can play on tender sympathies in the struggle for power, until, to avoid further emotional pain, her husband gives in.

Once he yields he is lost. The *rôle* of an invalid has won ten battles of this kind to every one gained by nagging or by displays of frank jealousy. And the tragedy of it all

is that the deeper the husband's love for his wife, the more ruinous will become this hold on his affections. It matters little that when symptoms of disease are displayed, for the purpose mentioned, the most competent medical examination seldom finds for them any physical cause. No one but the psychiatrist and the persons directly involved have an accurate concept of how painful or terrifying such symptoms can be made to appear when a situation arises that requires their influence to gain for the "invalid" her own way. So it is that business affairs, social functions, friendships, anything in fact that might constitute a menace to the wife's ability to dominate, are one by one relegated by the husband to places in his life subordinate to the demands of her "illness."

But in thus resolutely placing behind him, or "forgetting" his hopes and ambitions the pursuits of which satisfied his own legitimate needs for power, the husband errs in believing he has successfully put them out of his life. Deep down, these ambitions and strivings still persist and provoke a mental conflict be-

tween desire on the one hand, and what he feels to be duty on the other, that generates emotional tension. Mental conflicts require energy to feed upon and this energy must be drawn from other activities. So it happens that presently the distressed husband finds himself tiring easily, has difficulty in keeping his attention on his work, discovers that decisions are becoming slow and inaccurate, and feels himself in general slipping. From this point on, unless understanding help is invoked, failure is probable. Not necessarily business failure in the sense of bankruptcy, but failure within the meaning of a loss of driving power, a narrowing of interests, a diminution of confidence in one's ability to master ordinary situations, and an abandonment of one's goal in life. These may constitute failure as much as the inability to attain or to retain success in commercial or professional spheres.

The "Clinging Vine" Type of Wife

Another type of wife who tends to cause her husband to fail in achieving all that he

might do otherwise is found in the "clinging vine." Practically every one can recall among his acquaintances a woman of this kind. When she runs true to form a stock description fits her admirably—pretty, frivolous, fragile, and doll-like, with a trusting, appealing manner and the naïve *insouciance* of a child. Psychologically speaking, this is exactly what she is—a child. An adult in years and usually in intelligence, such a woman nevertheless has failed to grow up emotionally. She still lives on a juvenile level; her ways of reacting to everyday experiences and her habits of meeting the disagreeable or unexpected in life are essentially the same as those displayed during her childhood. This means that the methods she adopts to secure her own way may range from adult disguises of temper tantrums to the most ruthless use of sex-appeal. It is the variations of this latter method in particular that characterize the true "clinging vine." Instinctively, almost, a wife of this kind realizes she appears to best advantage in the *rôle* of pretty dependency. Drawing as much as the traffic will bear on her femininity and win-

some childishness, she strikes unerringly at her husband's Achilles heel by appealing to his instinct for protection. She leans on him, literally and theoretically, and in so doing becomes a parasite, sapping his energies for her own use and diverting his abilities from stabilizing interests in other matters essential to the family success.

This parasitism displays itself chiefly in the form of demanding for herself an undue quantity of his attention and services. His admiration for her must never flag and must be vocally expressed ; his engagements and affairs, no matter how important, must never conflict with hers, and if perchance responsibilities connected with the routine of the household are to be shouldered, somehow she manages invariably to slip from under their burden. The general emotional immaturity of a wife like this also is likely to extend to sexual relationships with her husband, and much mutual dissatisfaction and misunderstanding is apt to be provoked. If motherhood intervenes, it ordinarily is repugnant and unwelcome, although some women of this type are shrewd

enough to capitalize the advent of a child (there seldom is more than one) and weave it into their scheme of life in a manner to reinforce their demands on their husbands.

Exasperated observers of a "clinging vine" are accustomed to vent their feelings by calling her "selfish." Of course a "clinging vine" is selfish, without doubt, but merely to label a pattern of behavior contributes nothing to our understanding of why that pattern should be selected. It is a psychologic maxim that hidden behind any given display of human behavior, whether it be good, bad or indifferent, there always is a reason. Usually that motive can be traced back to its original production in childhood, where adult patterns of behavior are first laid down. That is why the psychiatrist so often is able to predict among children the types of personalities they likely will show as adults. Reversing the process, it generally is possible to demonstrate that the particular personality traits displayed by an adult merely are exaggerations or distortions of similar traits in evidence at eight or nine

years of age. This is especially true of the "clinging vine" personality.

In studying such a woman (it is only fair to say that male "clinging vines" occasionally also are found) one is impressed by the fact that the same demands for attention, the same selfishness, the same use of appealing wiles, and the same habits of dodging responsibility that characterize her as a wife, earlier characterized her as a child. These traits were the results, for the most part, of faulty parental training during the plastic years when her personality was in process of shaping. As a child, she found her demands for attention, even excessive ones, were lavishly gratified; her childish selfishness condoned; her evasions of responsibility or of being made to face reality, excused. Probably she was either an "only" child, or at least the favorite of the family, and it is equally probable that all during childhood and adolescence she was absolved from the necessity of doing difficult or unpleasant things for herself. Small wonder, then, that in marriage she still retains

her dependent and helpless *rôle*. She has never been allowed to know any other. If she insists, prettily but imperiously, that her husband must bear all the burdens of the family, take over all the planning, relinquish his own plans and hopes, and install her on a pedestal to receive his never-ceasing adoration, she merely is carrying over into her adult life the same practices that she found successful in childhood.

In still another way this emotionally immature, "clinging vine" type of wife detracts from her husband's success or contributes to his failure. Because she never has been allowed to outgrow her emotional dependency on her parents (chiefly her mother), she finds herself, as a wife, unable to make independent decisions even of the most unimportant nature. Moreover, she has not been taught to develop resources of her own with which to occupy leisure wholesomely, or to apply toward constructive projects. Doubtless she plays the piano or sings, but failing to be taught a true appreciation of music, her rendition is merely showy and shallow. Likewise

with books: her liking never has been trained out of the current "best-seller" class. Social service and charitable projects interest her only as vehicles permitting her to wax sentimental over the misfortunes of others—misfortunes from which she always has been protected.

This dependency, then, plus her incapacity to summon resources of her own, combines to prolong her *rôle* as a dependent daughter and to weaken that of an independent wife. It is this type of wife who so often insists at marriage on living within a few blocks of her parents. Her plea of loneliness during the first months of marriage seems plausible enough, and it is not until years have passed and the daily visits to the parental roof-tree continue, and the long summer vacations with mother have been repeated again and again, that the unfortunate husband wakes to the discovery that he has been emotionally deserted. On the strength of his love depends largely the degree of failure a husband married to a "cling-vine" wife will experience. The expenditure of energy and the strain of satisfying her

whims and demands may leave such a scant residue that insufficient is left over to meet the needs of business or of ordinary social intercourse. Such a husband, like his companion married to the jealous wife, finds himself gradually falling behind in the competition of daily existence and is faced at last with the realization that for him marriage, instead of being an equal give-and-take proposition, has been all give and mighty little take.

Wives Who Lack Faith in Their Husbands

More than one man's failure has been caused by a wife who lacked faith in his ability to succeed. An example was furnished three years ago by a middle-aged physician whose name might be Dr. Brown, but isn't. Taking the train one day for a certain city where a classmate had won conspicuous success as a psychiatrist, Dr. Brown laid his cards on the table, so to speak, and in the rôle of a patient placed himself in his colleague's hands.

"Bill," he explained to Dr. Green, the psy-

chiatrist, "I'm in a jam and I guess you're the only one around here who can help me. Let me tell you all about it in my own way, first, and then you ask any questions you like later."

Dr. Green nodded in acquiescence and settled back in his chair to listen. Frank Brown and he had been classmates through medical school and later served their internships at the same general hospital. There their respective ways diverged, Bill going in for the groundwork of a specialty training at a hospital for mental diseases, while Frank went directly into general practice, opening an office in a promising country town. In their college years Bill maintained that Frank was smarter than he, and predicted for him much success. After the separation following their hospital training a few desultory letters were exchanged, and then, as each became absorbed in his work, these stopped entirely, and for twelve years neither had seen the other.

Dr. Brown began his story hesitatingly, but gained confidence as he went along.

"When we left the hospital together you told me, and I was cocky enough to agree with

you, that in ten years I'd be an important medical figure in the State. I had a good mind, I was given fine training, and for a young medico I knew my stuff as soundly as any of them. In my first year of general practice in Smithtown I did so well I decided to get married. I specially liked public health work, and when I could I puttered around a lot assisting the county health officer, dabbling in T.B. prevention.

"In the meantime my practice was growing and I could count on a decent and reasonably steady income. About that time I got some new ideas in public health I wanted to try, but couldn't get enough support at Smithtown, although the health officer helped me. Some months after this my first youngster was born and a little later I received an offer to become health officer of the city of X. This was just the job I wanted, for in it I could try out my pet ideas. But my wife and I talked it over and finally passed it up. I've had three other opportunities since, but somehow I've stuck in Smithtown and lately I'm off my feed. Practice continues pretty fair, but it's almost

stopped growing, and the devilish part is I don't seem to care. I'm in a rut; I know it, but I haven't energy enough to pull out. I've lost most of my ambition, and instead of going to medical societies and keeping up with things, I sit around and smoke and read when practice is slow. I realize something is wrong, but I can't put my finger on what it is, so I've come to you for help."

As Dr. Brown concluded his statement, Dr. Green straightened up in his chair and said: "That's pretty tough, Frank, but I think we can get you back on your feet. Let's go into the situation and look at some of its strategic points. I'll probably have to dig into your personal life a bit, so don't get sore if I bring up family matters."

To make a long story short, the psychiatrist eventually pieced together the fragments of his colleague's history. When they were assembled they made a picture of failure, poignant in its frustrated hopes and ambitions. Dr. Brown married an estimable girl; estimable in everything except that she possessed an almost pathologic craving for security. Perhaps

the marriage itself chiefly represented to her one means of attaining security. Even as a girl she displayed the keenest fear—not of specific things like dogs or lightning or the dark—but fear rather of the time when she might become penniless and dependent on charity. Of course, there were at work deeply hidden psychologic mechanisms connected with this fear, but she was consciously aware only of an almost frantic pursuit of a position in life where the future would be safe and secure.

Her marriage apparently marked the success of this pursuit, and she felt that from now on, instead of seeking further, all she need do was retain the conquest already made and hold her own. Her husband, she appreciated, was a good doctor in a steady town; how good he was—in the sense of professional ability—she had no inkling. When the offer to become health officer of X was received she immediately foresaw in it a thousand insecurities. It promised a slightly larger income than Dr. Brown was making in Smithtown, but the Smithtown income was regular and certain

and the work in X might last only a year or two. She was sure it was politically controlled; there probably was a catch in it somewhere; maybe a mistake had been made about the salary; besides, these new ideas of his about public health might not prove practical, and if so, he wouldn't make good and doubtless would be discharged; better stay in Smithtown where existence was safe and sound and certain, if not brilliant.

This same emotional reasoning was applied to subsequent offers of other opportunities, and because Dr. Brown was a loyal, affectionate husband he allowed his better judgment to be pushed aside. But life became a drab and routine affair. Mrs. Brown was anxiously concerned only with the assurance that on the first of each month the bank balance was adequate to meet the rent and butcher's bills. By tears, by cajolery, by recriminations, and by dire predictions of the future she kept her husband's nose to the grindstone. She couldn't allow him to take a chance, and his brilliant potentialities were not permitted to see the light of day. He had good stuff in him and the

makings of a rare scientist, but never could he escape the humdrum cycle of daily work that called out only a fraction of his real ability. He was not allowed to forget that his "wife and family came first," and no amount of explaining could convince Mrs. Brown that if success should follow "taking a chance," the position of the whole family would be improved as much as his professional one.

At last he admitted defeat, put out of conscious mind his cherished hopes, and buckled down to the dull, colorless routine of a general practice that satisfied only a fragment of his knowledge that he was capable of doing something really big if only he would stand out against his wife's pleadings. The state of mind he described to Dr. Green was the result of his being thwarted, and the psychiatrist explained to him how it was produced.

Unlike some others, this case history has a happy ending. With the psychiatrist's help, Mrs. Brown was partially made to see that the handicap she imposed on her husband was really imposed on the whole family as well. A little later another desirable opportunity

arose in a distant city, and the elements of chance connected with it being rather less than usual, she was persuaded to agree to his acceptance. With much foreboding she kept her word, and now, three years later, after the brilliant handling of a complicated piece of public health work, her husband is a national figure. She receives the congratulations of her friends with a proud "I told you so" manner, but deep down she is amazed and incomprehensive at his success, and privately considers it due to a bit of luck rather than to any special ability on his part.

*The Wife with Abilities Superior to Her
Husband's*

Any discussion of wives as causes of failure could be prolonged indefinitely. At least mention must be made, however, of a few other types in addition to those already described. For example, there is the wife who possesses superior business ability and earning power to those of her husband. Because her abilities surpass his and because, by contrast, she stands

out conspicuously, she unintentionally wounds her husband's ego in a vulnerable spot. No male creature, no matter how humble, enjoys an eclipse of his masculine prestige by reason of his wife's accomplishment. Superior ability on a wife's part leads to the instillation in some men of a conviction of inferiority that in turn leads to abandonment of ambition and striving, in material fields at least. Consequently failure, if it ensues, arises out of a spirit of "What's the use? I can't compete with my wife's cleverness; why not let her run the show while I just drift along?"

Then there is the wife who is caught up in the meshes of a certain powerful and complicated psychological problem. Such wives sincerely believe they are marrying a husband, but, because of the unconscious problem just mentioned, are in reality marrying a symbol for their own fathers. No man indefinitely and successfully can continue to play a dual husband-father *rôle*, and when such a one realizes that he has been cast for that part, bitter disillusionment, accompanied in some instances by failure, follows. Incidentally, the

wife who in marrying a husband hopes to find a father substitute, and the wife who is emotionally immature, are the two types that psychiatrists most frequently find participating in divorce suits. Each, by reason of certain psychological mal-developments, finds adjustment to normal marriage virtually impossible.

At the outset of this article it was observed that only certain wives caused their husbands to fail. Not only is this observation confirmed by everyday experience, but it is immeasurably strengthened by the example of a far greater number of wives who are the principal cause of their husbands' *success* in life. A look at some of the qualities possessed by this latter type may prove interesting—and profitable.

First of all, the wife who causes her husband to succeed, almost certainly has already achieved emotional maturity, and has become an adult on every essential level. Either alone or with understanding help, she has been wholly successful in emancipating herself from an excessive emotional dependence on her parents, and in addition has come to a

reasonably accurate understanding of the nature of the forces that motivate her conduct. Consequently, she is burdened with far less of a conviction of inferiority than a sister who may still be contesting with her mother and father for the right to live her own life. It is difficult to overemphasize the importance of "growing up" emotionally, in connection with harmonious husband-wife relationships. Almost everything else depends first on this. For example, the wife who has really "grown up" intellectually, physically, and emotionally, no longer has need to resort to the unusual in an endeavor to "put herself across" to the rest of the world. She is legitimately confident of her abilities, while retaining, without discouragement, an appreciation of their natural limitations; she possesses an average and wholesome desire for power, but is able to satisfy this in other ways than in domination of her husband; nor has she need to lean unduly on him, for she has learned she is capable of standing on her own feet. Thus, the familial struggle for power loses its ruthlessness. It goes on, to be sure, but in parallel

fields instead of conflicting ones. Such a wife, intent on her husband's success, finds that her urge for power may be made to complement his rather than to compete with it. In so doing, their separate "drives" for power become fused into one, concentrated on the mutual goal of *family* success.

Likewise, the wife who has overcome her emotional immaturity will not find it necessary to compensate for a feeling of inferiority by entering the world of business, either in its commercial or its professional aspects. Such a wife may become a business woman, to be sure, and make good in it, but when she does it is for a more healthy reason than the compensatory one just mentioned. Even though she possesses business abilities superior to those of her husband, the truly "grown-up" wife usually enters this field only in response to a genuine economic need of the family. "Genuine" is stressed, because not a few other types of wives offer "economic need" as an excuse to conceal psychologic motives for going into the business world, when the economic need is not truly paramount.

Another almost priceless quality in the wife who causes her husband to succeed is the absence of a tendency to nag. As every one knows, the chronically nagging wife is a most prolific cause of husbandly failure. The underlying psychologic motives for nagging are too varied and complicated to permit of much discussion in this book. One of these motives, however, is again directly linked to that familiar specter, a feeling of inferiority. In numerous instances a wife who inwardly feels her social, personality, or intellectual attainments to be inferior to her husband's may discover, nevertheless, that she possesses real ability in the art of housekeeping. In this field she is immaculate, orderly, and undoubtedly efficient. Here, then, is something in which she can excel, and she realizes that it is to her advantage if she can manage to put her husband in a bad light, by way of contrast. Nagging about his household sins of commission and omission often is the means utilized to accomplish this, for to habitually nag implies that the nagger hopes to give an impression of superiority to which the nagee

has not been able to attain. With their customary *rôles* reversed, therefore, the nagging wife and the badgered husband resume their struggles for power. Such a wife is driven habitually to "keep after" her mate to come up to her relative state of perfection, for in so proving her superiority she manages to neutralize a part of her original feeling of inferiority.

Incidentally, if the husband of a chronic nagger should miraculously, over night, become truly as perfect as his wife professes she desires him to be, tragedy would envelop her. Her own self-esteem and comfort can be maintained only so long as her superiority in this one field is evident. Once let her husband come up to her level, and they become equals. But she cannot tolerate equality in this last stronghold. The relationship must be an upper and lower one, or nothing. As a result, if this miracle of transformation should take place, her victory would be lost and she would sink again into her slough of inferiority. Thus, the nagging wife, deep down in her heart, does not want and cannot afford to have

her nagging reconstruct her husband into the model she professes to desire.

The emotionally mature wife does not need to bolster up her self-esteem. She goes about her daily work modestly and serenely confident of the adequacy of her equipment, and feels no urge to put her husband in the wrong in order to show herself to be in the right. She has an average quota of other faults and failings, but this is not one of them. Consequently, her husband need not divert from his goal of success the measure of attention and emotional energy needed by the husband of a nagging wife in order to carry on under this irritation.

The wife who causes her husband to succeed likewise will make him feel her faith in his ability, provided he really has ability. On the other hand, it is a mistake for a wife to flatter her husband's cleverness, to profess faith in his skill, and to encourage him in an activity which she privately and sincerely believes he is ill equipped to handle. When, or if, a wife is genuinely convinced that her husband cannot achieve success in a given voca-

tion or task, it is misplaced loyalty to spur him on in it. Instead, provided she is sure her conviction has been reached on an intellectual and not on an emotional basis, it is better to be honest and in candor discuss with him the advisability of seeking success in another field. As often as otherwise the judgment of the emotionally mature wife is as sound—or even sounder—than her husband's, and more than one potential failure has been transformed into success by a husbandly acceptance of a wife's level-headed and impartial advice at a crucial moment.

It is not at all necessary that a wife let her husband see she is chiefly responsible for his success. Indeed, the clever wife will keep her activities in this respect quite in the background. Hundreds of successful men to-day owe that success to their wives, but they don't know it. And perhaps it is just as well they don't, for some, at least, would lose confidence in themselves if the secret were to be divulged.

The question of what can be done for men whose wives are causing their failure is a difficult one. First, it must be ascertained—and

accurately—whether the wife really is to blame or not. The writer fully appreciates that in connection with the types here described many exceptions exist. For example, it is well known that some men, if they are to have certain emotional needs of their own met, *must* marry a “clinging vine” type; others can succeed in life only if they have a wife who spurs them on by incessant demands, so that in satisfying these the husband’s stimulated energies sweep him on to business success as a sort of by-product.

But once he is certain that failure is largely attributable to his wife, a man must be willing to face reality and the probable necessity for making painful decisions, if he is to be successful in effecting a come-back. In severe instances, it may even require making a clear-cut choice between his wife and his life-work. In most cases, however, a reasonably adequate compromise may be reached if both husband and wife can find a common meeting-ground on which to discuss their difficulties.

To-day one of the most successful meeting-grounds of this kind is found in the office

of the well-trained psychiatrist. He is able frequently to point out to each the psychologic significance of the problem and to explain what changes in attitude are required and how they may be effected. Not infrequently, this will call for the professional treatment of one or both of the persons involved, before a satisfactory emotional readjustment can be made.

It is essential, if the husband is to retrieve his success in life, that he understand fully and accurately the meaning and purpose of his wife's symptoms or her particular personality traits. Again, such an understanding seldom can be brought about unless it follows the explanation of a disinterested third person who has special knowledge of the hidden forces at work in the problem. The husband himself is so close to the scene of the struggle that he can't see the forest because of the trees. Consequently, the psychiatrist, with his experience in similar situations and with his unbiased view of the whole problem, is enabled to offer valuable assistance.

Then, too, a bit of wholesome philosophy

will not come amiss. If failure has occurred in one realm of life's activities, there are many others affording opportunities of success. Versatility is a priceless quality to the failure. If he can turn his hand successfully to something else, he may still be able to extract sufficient satisfaction from life to keep his morale bolstered and the demands of his personality appeased.

“QUEER” FAILURES

The seclusive person, the unsocial, the morose, the grouch, the dissenter, and the habitually suspicious—all have slants of personality that tend toward failure.

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CHAPTER V

"QUEER" FAILURES

SOME men fail in life because they are queer; others succeed for the same reason. The varieties of queerness in people are as many, perhaps, as there are people in the world. But there is one kind of queerness which frequently—in fact, characteristically—results in failure. Psychiatrists call this kind of queerness by the technical name of "schizoid."

"Schizoid" is a word which comes from the same stem from which we get the word "scissors," meaning something split or broken. In this case the inference is that there is a break in the internal harmony of the personality; a mental split, as it were. Schizoid propensities appear in such types as the supersensitive, the unsocial, the eccentric, the morose and grouchy, the chronically rebellious, the suspicious, and the jealous.

The reader probably will be thinking, "Yes, but these traits are so common. Some of the greatest people the world has ever known were queer, then. Look at Whistler, with his white lock which he put in curl papers at night, and of which he was so vain that he hated to go out in damp weather. Look at the notoriously eccentric Samuel Johnson and his equally eccentric contemporary, Oliver Goldsmith. Look at Wagner, with his outbursts of temper; at Nietzsche, with his asceticism; at Molière, who killed himself, and at many artists, writers, actors, singers, and inventors of all ages."

It is true that among such queer people there have been many brilliant successes, but it is also true that there are thousands of men and women whose failure in the ordinary walks of life depends chiefly upon their personality queernesses, with no mark of genius to redeem them. Redemption, however, is possible for them, even without genius, if they will go about it in the right way. Some men and women have succeeded in spite of their

schizoid qualities, and others have turned these qualities into assets instead of liabilities.

Seclusiveness

Seclusiveness is a characteristic kind of schizoid queerness. The disinclination for mingling with others, the aversion for social contacts, the preference for aloofness, are all a part of this tendency. Such persons are apt to give explanations: "I was always shy"; "I feel so self-conscious"; "I'd much rather stay home and read." The typical queer personality makes no bones about his preference for his own company. "It's better than I can pick up elsewhere," one college student said airily.

Such persons become absorbed in their own dreams and fancies, and the outside world has only an indifferent interest for them. They go through the motions of living here, but their real life is in another world. Often, particularly in children, this is misinterpreted; the child is absorbed in reading or quiet play by

himself, and thus escapes the mischief normally incident to the natural activities of childhood. He is therefore regarded as unusually well behaved, studious, and intelligent. Intelligent he may or may not be; healthy he certainly is not.

As the seclusive child grows older he encounters increasing difficulties in living because of the increasing necessity of coöperating with other people. He or she is constantly in conflict or out of harmony—with his friends, or his wife, or his job.

Of course much depends on the degree of seclusiveness and the extent to which it is counterbalanced by other tendencies. Some seclusive people make startling successes. They cut through their difficulties with cold, unflinching, unfeeling courage, or they devise ingenious and beautiful ways of getting around them. Napoleon Bonaparte was certainly of this type. Innumerable poets and artists belong here among the seclusive; inventors, prophets, explorers, authors, musicians. George Washington, in contrast to Lincoln, who was of the opposite tempera-

ment, has been described as "silent, thoughtful, never disposed to conviviality, perfectly abstracted, his lips moving, no sound perceptible."

But while certain constellations of personality and circumstance determine these outstanding successes, there are innumerable failures wholly due to seclusiveness. We find many people of this type among misers, tramps, hermits, vagabonds, floaters, and that larger group who live perfunctory routine lives in the world of business—who keep themselves economically afloat, but never seem to get anywhere.

Such a case as this was Herbert C. "All my life," he said, "I've been different from other people. I don't care to be with people. I want to run away from them. I don't feel as if I were as good as any one else, so I can't bear to talk to any one. I can't think of anything to say. Even little children seem to have no respect for me. I think they sneer at me, but old people smile and look down on me. Their tone of voice, their manner and everything, indicate a critical attitude toward me. Noth-

ing they say in fun seems funny to me. Kidding is painful to me, not funny."

In spite of such feelings, Herbert made good grades at high school, though he had no social life and spent much time in day-dreaming, meditating, and reading up on unusual subjects.

After high school he had great difficulty in finding work that suited him. He would keep a job a while and then quit, because of a sense of uneasiness or a mild friction with one of the other employees. The solution of his case consisted partly in a psychological analysis of his difficulties, which showed him what was the matter and mitigated the pain of his inferiority feelings, and in the suggestion that he get a job better suited to his temperament, that of a rural mail-carrier.

When he married a girl whom he met along the route and she forced him to give up this job, his troubles began again, but he finally readjusted himself by securing a comfortable position sorting mail in a large post-office, where it was unnecessary for him to address more than a dozen words a day to other

employees. Unable to overcome his schizoid trait, as is often the case, he had adjusted his environment to it.

Another seclusive personality was Mary J. Mary was a model pupil in the grade schools. She was the pride of her parents because she was so diligent in her lessons, bringing home her books each evening and studying before supper instead of playing out of doors with the other children. She never gave her mother and father a moment's anxiety during her entire school life. Her teachers praised her because she always knew her lessons, never made any commotion, sat quietly and decorously in her seat until called upon. She never engaged in any mischief or misbehavior of any sort.

The other children did not like her, but her teachers and parents supposed that this was because they were jealous of her better grades. Occasionally they made fun of her, to which her reaction was simply to run as fast as she could for the seclusion of the school-room or home and bury herself in a book.

As she grew older, necessity forced her into some social contacts, but she was always ill at ease. She preferred to stay away from high school parties; said she did not care to have dates with the boys; didn't like to dance; took part in a few school activities reluctantly—with the exception of the religious exercises, upon which she was a regular and devoted but non-participating attendant.

Because of her high grades at college she was given a good school when she decided to teach. But her students did not like her and she did not like teaching. The work bored her, the children irritated her, and she was constantly having trouble with their parents.

In the middle of the second year she had what she called a nervous breakdown and resigned from her school. Thinking to find some congenial work, she took a business course. After this she tried several stenographic positions, but left each one because of minor difficulties with the people around her. Running short of money, she then took a job as a clerk in a store, but because of her unprepossessing manner with customers was demoted from the

sales department to the bookkeeping office, at a decrease in salary.

This work Mary did well, but was so depressed over what she considered her business disgrace that she quit after a few weeks. Finally, from sheer necessity she became a waitress in a restaurant. While she was floundering around in this, a friend who had known her in her better days and was aware of her good education and talents along certain lines, introduced her to a firm that needed a patient, persistent, intelligent person in a peculiar and isolated department. To her great surprise, Mary made an immediate and permanent success of this work. She is still doing it at a salary of three times what she was getting as a waitress and with infinitely more satisfaction to herself.

The origin of seclusiveness is a matter which is of great theoretical and practical interest to psychiatrists at the present time. How much is due to faulty home training, how much to inherited constitutional make-up, and how much to accidents in childhood, they are not all agreed. It is probable, however,

that to a large extent it is determined by the attitude and technique of the parents during the formative years of life.

The child who is overprotected by its parents, either because of illness or imagined illness, or because of neurotic tendencies on the part of the mother, is very likely to grow up with seclusiveness and other schizoid traits. Such a child never has enough experience with the encounters of social existence to know how to deal with them except by flight. Other seclusive children are probably made so by a different sort of failure on the part of the parents. Some parents frighten or bulldoze or shame their children into seclusiveness.

One of the simplest reactions is that of flight, pulling into one's shell like the snail. An interesting illustration of this was that of a young man of twenty-five whose parents had striven for ten years to get him to leave home. He insisted on staying on the farm, refused to go to dances, theaters, movies, parties or any form of social activity. His parents provided him with a car in the hope that he

would drive out and see his friends. He would never go unless he went with them to town or to some of the social events which they attended for the sake of getting him there. He was a good-looking young man and had many admirers. "They care for me, I guess," he said; "they all like me, but I don't care for them."

In this instance some of the causative factors were quite apparent. The father was a man of iron, with a loud, harsh voice, enormous arms and body, a blustering manner, and a fierce facial expression which made him really a rather formidable person on the surface. His heart was soft; he loved his boy very much, but there can be no doubt that the child had been terrified by his father at one time and that his later excessive fondness for him was, partly at least, a disguise for unconscious hatred and fear.

What can the person who is failing because he is too seclusive do to help himself? He can set out deliberately to make a social animal out of himself—whether at first he enjoys it or not; he can attend church and lodge, and

dances and parties, and force himself to meet with and talk to people. Usually there is a starting point—a residual friendship, a fondness for baseball or golf, an old club. These can be developed and pushed. This will stimulate a little interest in his fellow-men so that, while he may not continue so energetic a program as at first, he will come to tolerate or even enjoy a certain amount of it. But, whether pleasurable or not, it must be done as systematically and unfailingly as any medicine would be administered in another disease. For this condition is, it should be remembered, a disease, and needs treatment—not mere description or condemnation. He can, moreover, seek occupation, or self-expression in work which will not require too much mixing with people. Farming attracts schizoid personalities and they usually succeed at it, but there are many equally isolated positions in the heart of the city.

The Unsocial and Morose

A second type of queerness masquerades as stupidity, but it is a false front. There is in it

an unresponsiveness, a lack of appreciation, which leads others to do the excluding. Persons of this kind have little interest in their environment; take no part in social and civic affairs; manifest no initiative and no progress. They often brag about their conservatism, their fondness for the old-fashioned things, their dislike of modern innovations. They prefer to work alone with their own tools. Many such are to be found amid the welcome isolation of the prairie farms. It is the particular personality trend of these people which makes it so difficult for the progressive, socially minded farmer to effect rural coöperation, even to the extent necessary to secure relief from the present agricultural distress.

Harold L., once a fairly successful engineer, belonged to this group. He did his work in a routine fashion and lived by himself in a rooming-house. Apparently by accident he met a young woman in the rooming-house who interested him, and whom he seemed to interest even more. Partly perhaps through her initiative, they were married.

Shortly afterward he began to feel dissatisfied with himself and his situation and told his wife that he never was made for an engineer, that they ought to go out West and take a homestead. His wife was much opposed to this, being fond of city life, but he became increasingly insistent. As a compromise, his wife took some of the money she had inherited and bought a small property not far from a mid-western city.

He talked a great deal about the wonderful freedom and independence that was a farmer's and tried to show his wife that the change had been a most happy one. She failed to see this, but did shortly begin to see a change in her husband's disposition. As an engineer he had always been efficient, and after the first year or two he was an efficient although ignorant farmer; but as he learned more from experience, he seemed to be able to profit less and less from it. He refused to take his neighbors' advice; said they were ignorant old clods; he lost money on his stock; insisted on planting certain grains which experience had shown did not grow well in that locality; sold

his cattle at the wrong time in spite of the advice of his neighbors, and made more and more of a mess of everything. With this he became morose and moody. He accused his neighbors, his wife, and her relatives of being unsympathetic and even hostile, scolded and shouted at the children, abused his stock, and in general gave evidence of an exceedingly unstable mental state.

The Silly and "Stunty"

Very similar to the "stupid" type is the silly type. Such individuals are prone to show their bad judgment in trivial and senseless stunts. They write anonymous letters, compose doggerel of various sorts which they often think very witty, and make public exhibitions of themselves of one sort and another. One such man who had been refused a date by his sweetheart, inscribed some signs with reproaches and tacked them up on the fence surrounding her residence. Others of this type reveal themselves chiefly by their mannerisms, the most usual of which is a charac-

teristic giggle which often becomes attached to every sentence the individual speaks. Gestures of various sorts are quite common; many will recall the effective comedy stunts introduced by Harold Lloyd in his picture of *Harold Lamb* as the college freshman.

The Grouch

Some seclusive people build around themselves a kind of armor of grouchiness to keep other people away. These folk may eke out an existence running grocery stores in outlying districts, or teaming, or keeping books, but in any situation requiring contacts with others they are apt to be painful misfits. They are a familiar problem in the daily life of every employment manager, often being retained only because of some propensity, or knowledge, or skill which makes them valuable in spite of the mental inflammation they cause in the surrounding personnel. If the wheels of chance whirl them to the top, or if they frighten and annoy away all except subordinates, and become masters of the machine, they are often highly successful as the world

judges. Bank presidents by the score belong in this category.

The moving pictures contain some excellent examples of this type of personality, none of them better than the hard-boiled sergeant in "Beau Geste." In this instance the trait was complicated by a sadistic strain, but the utter unsociability and self-concern in all their unloveliness were there, excellently portrayed.

John B., was a grouch. When fifteen he ran away from home and went to the middle West, where by one hard job after another he eked out an existence. Gradually he secured a little property and by tremendous exertion, close dealing, and long hours of hard work he increased his holdings until he was accounted a man of means. With his wife and children he was irascible and mean. His wife did not know until after his death how wealthy they really were. At the time he died he had accumulated many sections of land and was known to thousands of people, but aside from the few whom he patronized with his money he cannot be said to have had a single friend.

Old Mrs. C. was another example. She was the neighborhood crank. She kept a rabbit-hutch with several hundred rabbits in it, for no apparent purpose. She collected old newspapers and magazines and piled them up in great stacks in her attic and barn. She was famous for flying into rages at the grocery boys and mail men and accusing them of all sorts of villainy. At the time of her husband's death she accused the grave-digger of having cheated her with regard to the time spent in making the excavation for her husband's grave. The family lived with her only by dint of the most discreet silence and tact. They were accustomed to many outbreaks of accusation and vituperation.

In spite of all this, the old lady became quite well known as an authoress and accumulated considerable means because of her shrewd business dealings.

Dissenters

Those who forge through the mass of humanity about them, not in the manner just

suggested, but with more or less aggressive-ness, waving the battle-axe and shouting the war cry, stirring up resentments and hostilities, baiting and nagging and criticizing and challenging and attacking—these constitute another group of the "queer." Here again there are occasional successes, successes for which the world is grateful—Savonarolas, and John Browns, and Garrisons, and Dorothea Dixes, and Florence Nightingales, and Patrick Henrys, and John Husses, and Martin Luthers, and John the Baptists.

But, on the other hand, these same traits may lead to failure, producing labor agitators of the wrong types, political rebels, and general unconstructive trouble-makers. Every employer knows many instances of this type. In a large railroad strike in the middle West a few years ago, one of the most prominent characters was a tall, angular, loquacious man who was always explaining. He explained elaborately to many of the workers wherein they were being defrauded, and then explained to them in innumerable stump speeches and doorstep harangues the advan-

tages and disadvantages of a strike; then when the men had about come to a decision that they would strike, he began a campaign to show them the foolishness of striking.

By this time it was too late to head it off, and after the men had struck he went about organizing the strikers and suggesting proposals of reconciliation. Later he went to the railroad and told them, correctly of course, that he had done his best to stop the strike and for that reason ought to be reëmployed by them instead of being blacklisted. When the railroad refused to do that, he carried the matter from union to union and from lawyer to lawyer. He consulted a psychiatrist, because he felt that his nervous system had been ruined by the stress and strain of the affair.

Suspiciousness

But most serious of all, in the eyes of a psychiatrist, is the unhappy trait of suspiciousness. There is probably no single symptom of abnormal psychology which is looked upon as more ominous by experienced physicians

than the tendency to suspect a malignant attitude in the people around you. "He's got it in for me, I just know it"; "She looked at me kind of funny; I think she's cooking up something"; "They all seem to pick on me for some reason or other."

Innocent sounding, aren't they? Any one of these remarks, taken alone, even without any justification, might be totally insignificant. On the other hand, it might be merely the vocal manifestation of many similar notions; such meditations, and the tendency to persist in the attitude of suspicious accusations, are exceedingly serious. They are serious first because they indicate a marked degree of schizoid tendency; they are serious secondly because they generally lead the person who harbors them to take all kinds of defense attitudes dangerous to himself and those around him.

This suspiciousness appears in countless forms. A man begins to suspect his wife's faithfulness; a housewife cannot be persuaded that the iceman or the grocer is not defrauding her; a student is sure his teachers are giving him harder lessons and poorer grades

than the other students; an employee thinks the foreman is discriminating against him; a farmer is sure his neighbor is stealing grain from him; the business man wonders if there is not a plot among his associates to freeze him out.

Any of these things might be true, to be sure; they are all possible and they all do happen. But when they are true they are usually known, sooner or later, by many people, not just suspected by one. To the schizoid personality of the suspicioning type, such doubts, fears, and convictions keep occurring and recurring. They burn into the very soul of their victim; he can think of nothing else; his bitterness becomes a rancor and he finds what seems to him more and more evidence of his enemy's malice.

Obviously, the student, or wife, or employee with such tendencies is constantly in difficulties. He builds a wall of isolation about himself, alienating human companions, making himself miserable and disagreeable. There are many chronically suspicious people in the world whom no one considers "in-

sane," but every one considers "disagreeable." Yet the difference between these two adjectives is largely one of degree.

An extreme case of a man who failed because of suspiciousness will serve as an illustration of many cases, most of them milder, of this type:

Frank P. was a consulting chemist for a manufacturing concern. Well educated, he was of great value to his company because of that and his technical skill. He spent most of his time in his private laboratory working out solutions of difficult commercial problems. One morning he came to the office of the president to report that he was dissatisfied; he would not say why, except that it was not a matter of salary. The president was perplexed and pointed out that he could scarcely do much to relieve the situation unless he knew more about it. The chemist narrowed his eyes, lowered his voice, said very impressively, "I think you know very well what I mean," and left the room.

An investigation followed, but nothing unusual could be learned concerning Frank. He

worked assiduously all day, apparently went immediately to his rooms in the evening, and after supper in a near-by restaurant and an occasional motion picture show retired early. His work was above criticism. He was well liked by the few employees who knew him at all.

About a week later he appeared in the president's office again to discuss a technical matter. Nothing was said about the previous interview and he departed in his usual calm, reserved mood. The president and his advisers concluded that the matter was not worth considering further, but a few days later the chemist returned and asked for a private interview. This was granted.

He apologized to the president for his previous abruptness and said that he had been sure that he (the president) had been the author of a series of annoying molestations which he had been suffering for some months past. The chemist described how carefully placed vials and tubes would be displaced or upset when he absented himself from the room for a while; he was confident that some

of his reagents had been adulterated; he could swear that some of his most important reference books had been hidden, and his life made miserable in a dozen malicious ways.

This, he said, he had at first thought to be tricks on the part of some of the other employees; later he decided that they would not dare to do it; that it must be some one who wanted his position, most likely a Mr. S. But Mr. S. had been in Europe during the summer and the molestations had continued. Therefore, upon reflection he had felt sure that they could come from no one else but the president of the concern.

He had, he said, decided to test his chief out by an interview and had been convinced more firmly than ever of the correctness of his theory by the president's annoyance and perplexity. But the graciousness shown at their second meeting had quite upset his theory and he felt it only decent for him to make this apology and explanation. He was sure now that the prosecution was the result of Ku-Klux Klan activities!

Of course, a personality split that has be-

come so extremely unreasonable and lacking in sensibility and judgment is a serious matter for all concerned. It frequently occurs that instead of changing his mind as to the guilty parties, the suspicious individual takes justice, as he regards it, into his own hands. President McKinley was assassinated by a man with this type of delusion. Twenty-three persons were killed in one day in Winfield, Kansas, by a man who believed himself to be a victim of persecution. Every psychiatrist has examined numerous patients who have committed murder on the basis of similar delusions of suspicion.

A lawyer's son had been nervous and upset for some months during his senior year at college, and although he made numerous remarks to the effect that he thought some one was doping him, trailing him, trying to blackjack him, and so on, his father disregarded them and tried to assure him that he was mistaken, and only needed a vacation. He took him on a fishing and hunting trip, "to get it off of his mind," as he put it, and while on this trip the son shot and killed the father.

A man now in one of the state hospitals for the criminal insane was known by his relatives to be "queer" for five years before he walked into a doctor's office one day and accused him of hypnotizing his wife. The doctor rather testily asked him to leave, which he did, returning some days later with a gun, which he emptied into the doctor, saying, "You'll not hypnotize any more women and ruin homes for men."

Such dramatic episodes are not the rule, although they are frequent enough to be regarded as real dangers in all such cases. Ideas of being spied upon, cheated, meddled with, lied about, defrauded, mistreated, plotted against, talked about, surreptitiously ridiculed, etc., are always unhealthy. They are likely to continue to prevail in the mind of the suspicious person and lead him to conduct which is anti-social and even dangerous.

Case after case could be cited where good jobs have been thrown over by business men and women who believed themselves unfairly treated, discriminated against or persecuted. Similar cases could be cited where excellent

workmen had to be discharged because of their persistent tendency to get into rows over imagined slights. Case after case could be cited in which unjustifiable jealousy on the part of one of the married partners was the cause of separation.

Traits of the kind I have described all tend toward failure. Yet many personalities conspicuously queer have averted failure. What did George Washington and Napoleon Bonaparte and other successful people of this type have that they failed to fail?

They probably had two things. They had certain other personality traits or talents which enabled them to express themselves in spite of their schizoid inclinations and which may even have utilized their seclusiveness or their grouchiness to the enhancement of their self-expression. In the second place, they probably had fortuitous or deliberate advantages in the selection of an environment. In order to achieve anything like success, the schizoid personality must have his environment specially modified to fit his particular needs. Occasionally he will forge his way

through to a dominant position, above the necessity for human contacts, and hold it, but he must have either this or some other form of modified isolation. If individualistically handled, his possibilities may be developed.

What should a man do if he thinks he is "queer"?

Well, if he has schizoid traits, he should make a deliberate effort to recognize them. The first step in overcoming them is recognition.

By frankly recognizing the disadvantage of unsocial tendencies and taking every opportunity to cultivate social technique, one can to a certain extent develop the more balanced elements of his character at the expense of the unbalanced. A little success achieved by deliberate efforts in this direction is likely to stimulate greater efforts and greater success. Many persons could be more agreeable if they really wanted to be, and many would want to be if they knew the real nature of their disagreeableness.

The second step is evaluation. Such schizoid traits as a person has may develop into

his chief assets. Suspiciousness might be valuable to a detective. Detachment from the ordinary human emotions is particularly valuable in certain professions—in a judge, for example, or in a psychologist and to some extent in a psychiatrist. It enables them to be much more accurate in their analysis of various problems which their patients present. Some of the most successful psychoanalysts and psychotherapists in the psychiatric profession are objective to a degree of which they are capable only because of their native schizoid tendencies. The same is true of judges and executive officers of various types. Numerous illustrations of this have already been cited. The intelligent schizoid will try to place himself in a position where his talents will be most useful.

If, on the other hand, the schizoid realizes that he is queer and has tried unsuccessfully to turn his queer tendencies into productive channels, the thing for him to do next is to consult a psychiatrist. A psychiatrist is a physician whose life-work is to understand and help maladjusted persons. If queerness is a

hindrance and the queer person is unable to solve the problem himself, it is obvious that he should get help from those who have help to offer.

Having consulted a psychiatrist and laid his problems before him, the schizoid should ask him, first, to confirm or deny the diagnosis; second, to work out the origin and development of his personality traits, with particular reference to the conflicts he is having, and from this to help him find for himself the most propitious type of environment.



DAY-DREAMERS AND BLUFFERS

Day-dreaming and bluffing are both attempts to escape from reality. Both are justified at times, but more often they lead to failure.

BY

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CHAPTER VI

DAY-DREAMERS AND BLUFFERS

"THERE, but for the grace of God, goes John Wesley," is said to have been the pious reflection of the great ecclesiastic as he watched a criminal being led to execution. And, "There, but for the intervention of circumstances over which we have little control, go you and I," might well be remarked by each of us as we watch the habitual day-dreamer go down to failure in the world of business.

Day-dreaming is essentially an escape from reality, but we can't afford to indulge in any self-congratulation that we have avoided a similar failure, for every one of us resorts to day-dreaming to some extent, and the chief difference between those of us who fail and those who succeed is a quantitative one. The chronic and excessive day-dreamer is likely to fail in the business world because his reveries have been carried over into a habit that

smothers initiative and renders ineffective his energy. The rest of us secretly are proud in the belief that so far as day-dreams are concerned we can echo the boast of the drinker who "can take it or let it alone." Early in our careers we found out that life scarcely would be bearable for long were it not for the solace to be found in day-dreams. They furnish us with an opportunity to flee for a brief time from the harshness and the disappointments in the world of reality. But the average day-dream is a transitory sort of affair on which, in all prudence, most of us set an automatic time limit.

Thus, in books, at the theater or in the concert-hall we lose ourselves (and also reality) in an identification with, or a sharing of the emotional experiences of, the characters or thoughts portrayed. When, however, the story has ended, the play finished, or the symphony completed, we are willing to return to mundane things and resume our burdens, strengthened and cheered by our momentary flight. Not so with the habitual day-dreamer. For him the book is never ended; the play goes on

forever, and the faint strains of the music echo persistently. He makes an effort to return to reality, to be sure, but his habit holds him back so that he returns but part way. The result, all too often, is failure; for business, of all the enterprises in life, demands a complete and vivid participation in material things, if one's head is to remain above water.

Like mental conflicts, day-dreaming calls for an expenditure of energy; and because we have only so much energy at a given time to expend, the energy needed for day-dreaming must be taken from other mental activities. A mind, like a country, divided against itself must eventually fall. So the habitual dreamer who injects a pleasant but futile wishful-thinking into a mentality that should be devoted to planning means for meeting commercial competition is apt to be overtaken by a rival less handicapped.

The day-dreamer in business is a familiar sight, especially in the less important niches of the business world. There are, however, few failures caused by day-dreaming in big business because, with negligible exceptions, the

chronically day-dreaming type has not been able to negotiate the lower rungs of the ladder to success before failure overtakes him. In other words, there are practically no day-dreaming failures in big business because there are practically no day-dreamers in big business to fail. The relentless competition among the higher executive positions in the business world; the imperative need for concentrating and focusing with an undivided intensity *all* one's energies and not just a portion of them, on the task in hand; and the demand for a full hundred per cent. contact with and absorption in reality, are obstacles which the day-dreamer seldom can surmount. The environment of big business is too fierce and too ruthless and too harsh for him, and usually he goes down under the pressure of the modern industrial and commercial system.

But in minor positions the day-dreamer is, as we were saying, a familiar sight. His chief habit is the substitution of *wishing* for *doing*. He dawdles, he postpones, he temporizes, and seldom can he be depended on to come up to the scratch, so to speak, when a crisis arises

demanding decisive action. He lives largely in the future. He is always *going* to do something really splendid—but somehow he never does. He plans vast projects; he visualizes himself as the directing head of giant corporations; he conquers the enemies of waste, inefficiency, and lost motion (ironically enough, this last seems to be a special favorite among day-dreamers), but always he uses the future tense. Sometimes he has real ability, but often this is a self-delusion. Usually his dreams are futile, impractical, and beyond his or any one else's capacity to accomplish.

Right here fairness demands that some exceptions be drawn. *There are day-dreamers who succeed*; who dream not only big dreams (wild dreams, most of the rest of us call them) but who translate them into actual and constructive projects. That is where the qualitative difference in day-dreams enters in, as well as the quantitative one. The Panama Canal, for example, was made possible by one man's day-dreams. Had it not been for the reveries of General Gorgas who dreamed of methods to conquer the miasmatic sanitary conditions

—the yellow fever, the malaria, and the other tropical plagues that previously had made the Canal Zone a reeking swamp of death—that vast engineering triumph never could have been born. Likewise, it was out of the day-dreams of the late Elbert Gary that the gargantuan United States Steel Corporation was made possible. And again, thousands of men and women living to-day owe their lives and their restored health to the fused day-dreams of the Canadian physicians Banting and Best, who, in dreaming of Insulin, scotched diabetes, one of mankind's cruelest enemies.

This qualitative difference in day-dreams is all important. It spells the difference usually between success and failure. Most dreams are vague and rambling. But the kind just mentioned are forward-looking thoughts—logical, clear cut, and based on real ability as well as on inspiration. They are not permitted to ramble aimlessly about in the dreamer's mind, but instead are dragged out into the sharp white light of reality, where they are subjected to scrutiny and the acid tests of practicability. Then, if found feasible, they

are harnessed up to useful—and practical—projects. This is the qualitative difference, and most of what follows in this article does not apply to those day-dreamers who translate nebulous dream-stuffs into the things that make civilization progress.

The reasons why some people day-dream futilely and to excess are interesting. Contrary to widespread opinion, day-dreaming is not caused by "laziness"; nor is it due, as some irritated observers would have us believe, to "sheer cussedness." Instead, excessive day-dreaming of the type that eventually causes failure is almost invariably associated with a feeling of inferiority (whether justified by the facts or not) and has its origin in a personality marked by oversensitiveness and timidity. Such a personality shrinks from participating in the rebuffs and the rivalries and the give-and-take of the everyday world; and, to compensate itself for the harshness of a factual environment, retreats to the rose-colored warmth of an imaginary one.

But while it is obvious enough to see why such a sensitive personality would desire to es-

cape from the cold world of reality, it is not so easy to penetrate to the underlying reasons for the development of that degree of sensitiveness in the first place. Like the answer to many another problem of disordered emotional life, the answer to this one is found in the home and in early parental influences on the childhood of the man or woman who is so handicapped. Thus, for example, the boy who has had his childhood completely dominated by and made subordinate to an older brother, may likely enough develop the conviction that he is not as good, or as able, or as clever as other boys. Such a conviction is depressing and unpleasant to face; so to boost his self-esteem and to find some outlet for his frustrated desire to wield power, he builds for himself a world of fantasy in which no older, dominating brothers are permitted to enter, and in which the builder can always be the boss.

Once the habit is formed of escaping into the imagination when the discomforts of reality threaten, it is difficult to overcome it. The less sensitive a child is, the more likely will he

be to resort to day-dreaming only on special occasions. Not alone the real or fancied discrimination of parents for an older brother may cause sensitiveness, and consequently day-dreaming, but scores of other situations in childhood produce the same chain of events.

And so it seems that failure in many cases is not caused by day-dreaming after all, but instead by the disabling sensitiveness and timidity that underlie day-dreaming. Men who fail, presumably because they day-dream too much, really fail because to a biologic make-up that was unusually sensitive and delicately balanced from the beginning was added a last straw in the form of certain emotionally unhealthy experiences during childhood that tipped the scales definitely toward a handicapped career. Thus, these childhood experiences (which were largely the child's reaction to the emotional attitudes and training methods of his parents) are the critical factors that determine whether or not he will have to resort to the balm given by day-dreams in order to limp through life. Another child,

even though biologically conditioned in a similar way, might well have been able to cope successfully with the harshness and rivalries of life had he been spared from subjection to the unhealthy experiences just mentioned.

The Bluffer

There is another type of man who fails in the world of business because he seeks, not wisely but too well, to escape from reality. He is the bluffer. Unlike the day-dreamer, he may be and often is found occupying executive positions of importance in big business—but generally only for a time. Curiously enough, the bluffer and the day-dreamer have much besides an origin (arising out of similar childhood experiences) in common. Both bluffing and day-dreaming represent types of flight reactions to certain undesirable experiences. In them the psychiatrist sees their possessors endeavoring to defend themselves against unpleasant or unpropitious facts in life.

The two ways of defense are quite different, it is true, but their purpose is the same in each

instance. What it is that makes one child defend himself by retreating into a day-dream, and another by bluffing, is not accurately known. Perhaps the same "biological conditioning" earlier referred to may determine the difference. Or maybe it is due to the fact that the habit of day-dreaming generally is found in what is called the "introverted" (turned inward) type, while the habit of bluffing is more in keeping with the "extraverted" (turned outward) type. This question, however, must remain for the present a purely academic one; for so far no one knows clearly why some people are introverts and others are extraverts. The practical thing to realize is that the habitual bluffer bluffs because he has found by experience he can "put himself across" successfully in no other way.

For a picture of a typical bluffer the ordinarily dry pages of Webster's Dictionary contain a dynamic description: "*bluff; deception produced by manner, speech or expression—often a pretense of assurance covering real uncertainty or weakness . . . to frighten or deter others from accomplishing a purpose by*

making a show of confidence in one's strength or resources."

We all know men and women for whom this description might have been written to order. Outwardly we are prone to display scorn or righteous indignation when a bluffer has used his habit in accomplishing a particularly successful exploit. This is particularly true if his bluff causes him to succeed in something that we ourselves have previously failed in. Inwardly, however, we cherish a bit of envy and not a little admiration for him. At heart we are all, every one of us, bluffers to some extent, and it is a well-known psychologic phenomenon to pretend to despise or hate those traits in others that secretly we possess ourselves but lack courage or opportunity to use. That is why the bluffer goes farther in the business world before failure ensues than does the day-dreamer.

In fact, there is widespread belief that on the approach of a day-dreamer to the sacred portals of Big Business, the office boy has instructions to remove the "Welcome" mat with all possible haste, while the approach of a

bluffer is more likely to be met with an out-rush by the president and all the vice-presidents to capture his services. There can be no denying that bluffing and bluffers are important factors in the carrying on of modern business—indeed, one is almost tempted to say “indispensable factors,” for a great many big deals would have failed to materialize if some one had not acted in accordance with the dictionary explanation of the word “bluff.”

The psychiatrist is concerned professionally with bluffing, for he has learned that it is closely associated with fear, and a goodly number of the psychiatrist's patients come to him because of the handicap some form of fear has imposed on them.

In this connection it is interesting to observe something so obvious as to escape the attention of all but the most thoughtful. It is this: That in order to stage a successful bluff, some form of fear must be aroused in those who are to be bluffed; but the bluffer himself is largely impelled to bluff because he too has had fear aroused in him—fear, based on a realization that he possesses insufficient legit-

imate ability to succeed without the aid of bluffing. So the result is the paradox of the bluffer, himself motivated by fear, endeavoring to arouse fear in those he would bluff.

It all seems very confusing, but really it is not. It simply means that every one of us possesses the capacity to have fear aroused within us. What form that fear may take depends very largely on what our infantile and childhood experiences happen to have been. For example, if we possessed a stern and harsh father, our fear may be that of authority, no matter how authority chances to be symbolized. In fact, one familiar type of bluffer personifies the quintessence of authority; big framed, aggressive mannered, deep voiced, menacing appearing, he is apt to awe and overwhelm us with the appearance of sheer power.

If already we have been "conditioned" to a fear of paternal authority, such an individual often can work his will with us. His bluff succeeds because we are too intimidated to risk opposing him. Of course sooner or later he tries to bluff some one whose assortment of

fears do not include those concerning authority, and then the bluff fails and all his appearance of power and menace has gone for naught. As a matter of consolation, that is precisely what happens to practically every bluffer, no matter what method he uses, if you give him enough rope. And it is a sort of poetic justice that when the habitual bluffer does fail, his failure more often than not comes about because he himself has been successfully bluffed by a bigger, stronger, and more superior bluffer.

Thus it is seen that the mechanism behind bluffing is almost identical with the one behind day-dreaming—namely, a defense against certain unpleasant facts in life. Both types, like as not, originally were oversensitive and timid, and both types shrink from facing life-as-it-is without attempting to soften some of its harshness. The day-dreamer softens existence by attempting either to deny it or by running away from it. The bluffer tries to soften it by appearing fiercely to attack it in the hope he can find a way to twist the facts of life to his own advantage. Failure

in both cases ensues when the dreamer loses contact with reality so completely that he lives wholly in a world of fancy (expressed in its final and most extreme form by a type of serious mental disease called "*dementia praecox*"), or when the bluffer's bluff has been called and his defensive mechanism no longer protects him.

Although James T. was not at all his real name, it will do to designate a man who represents one type of bluffer who fails. As a boy, Jim had been endowed with but average, perhaps even mediocre, ability. It took him a considerable time to learn to do anything new (although he was distinctly not subnormal), and his reasoning things out in advance or between cause and effect was sluggish. Consequently, at school his progress was painful, and because he had just an ordinary physical endowment he couldn't do anything spectacular in the field of fisticuffs or in athletics. All this created in Jim a feeling of inferiority and a timidity at testing either his wits or his strength against others. Then, quite by accident one day, something happened that

opened up, even to his slightly dull mind, possibilities too rich to be ignored. For a long time the other boys—big ones and little ones—had been accustomed to taunt him and pick on him and provoke him into fights, in which he always was being beaten. One day at recess the school bully dared him to fight back, after snatching his cap off and stamping on it. Jim was terrified and sought to run, but he was in a corner by the fence and couldn't. The rest of the crowd egged the bully on joyously and jeered at Jim.

As the bully advanced, Jim put up his fists instinctively and then shut his eyes to await assassination. But for some unknown reason just then the worm turned and the miracle occurred. Jim to this day cannot remember what happened, but the crowd saw a cowering, horror-frozen boy of seven transformed instantly into a fury. With a bellow of rage, face contorted in a terror-inspiring leer, eyes narrowed and teeth snarling, Jim rushed at the bully and literally swarmed all over him. Fists and feet were used so indiscriminately that no damage was inflicted, but with a howl of sur-

prised fear the bully unscrambled himself as best he could from the human tornado and ran ignominiously home. He hadn't been physically hurt to speak of, but he had become panic-stricken at the horrendous apparition which confronted him.

With the fickleness of crowds, the "gang" turned on the bully and welcomed Jim to their hearts. They gave him a reputation as a battler, a bruiser, a "tough guy" that was sweet music in his ears. And so Jim capitalized this miracle, and as he grew older used it whenever it gave promise of success. His feeling of inferiority was as keen and depressing as ever, and at heart he was as timid as ever, but he had learned a valuable piece of military strategy—he had learned that he could defend himself by attacking. Figuratively speaking, Jim (and other Jims who use the same weapons) defended himself against the discomforts of contending with a world that was slightly too much for him, by buckling around himself a thick, protecting armor of bluster, bravado, and loud talking, by means of which

he hoped to frighten off any one who dared oppose him.

As high school and college years were passed behind, Jim (now Mr. James T.) continued to "get away" with his bluster and bluffing. He obtained and was promoted in several desirable positions, but somehow he always seemed to be making a change. It appeared as though he could remain in one place or among one group just so long before they would "get onto" him and call his bluff. Then he would move on to another where neither he nor his pet device were known. His method of bluffing or "putting himself across" was the familiar one of browbeating his subordinates, talking sonorously and impressively—but albeit respectfully—to his superiors, and bowling over by sheer force of lung power his opponents in an argument.

But one by one, sooner and sooner, his friends and associates began to penetrate his armor of boasting and bluffing, and to discover what a timid, shrinking, hollow-shell lay beneath it. Of course, once his armor was

penetrated and his secret exposed, James T. began to slip. One can't continue long a blustering pose when the very people one needs to affright laugh instead of run away. And so Mr. T. began to fail. The psychiatrist was interested in the form his failure assumed because not a few people with personalities such as he presently displayed had those personalities molded by very similar events. As his bluffing became less and less successful, T. began to grow bitter and cynical. He complained the world hadn't given him a square deal; that people, and especially employers, were "out to get him," and that he "hadn't had a chance." He became irritable and abusive and therefore lost several good jobs. To his view, being fired was but one more proof of the discrimination being practised against him. His protective armor at last failed him completely and, to make a long story short, the last any one has heard of James T. was in the *rôle* of leader of a group of fiery "radicals," embittered, sour, without daring to permit himself to have insight into the true reasons for his difficulties: a thoroughly

uncomfortable, if not undesirable, citizen.

Bluffing, like day-dreaming, should not be utterly condemned. There are bluffs that serve useful purposes. Many an army in wartime has successfully bluffed the enemy out of a strategic position by a false display of strength. Not a few incipient panics in theaters and elsewhere have been averted because some one, also terror-stricken at heart, has summoned up an appearance of confidence and calmness that bluffed the crowd. Even in the business world some bluffs occasionally do good and benefit every one concerned. A certain well-known financier tells of how, as a young man, he was down on his luck and oppressed with a profound conviction of his own inferiority. Happily, this feeling of inferiority was not based on facts, for he possessed genuine ability and experience in a special and scantily cultivated business field. But his manner was so timid and he radiated so little confidence in himself that job after job was refused him. Drawing at last on his final reserves of courage and his bank balance, he purchased a cheery but tasteful suit of clothes, a cane,

gloves, and a flower for his buttonhole, and with a desperation born of necessity sallied forth to an interview with the head of a large firm. Trembling inwardly, sick with fear and depression, he put everything he had into a monumental bluff. But it worked. He talked slowly and in a rich timbre; he lounged nonchalantly; he fairly oozed self-reliance and ability from every pore; and the talents he admitted, with quiet confidence, as possessing could only have been duplicated by a superman. By means of his bluff he "sold" himself completely.

But when he actually began work his self-confidence all vanished again and once more he believed failure lay but around the corner. Readers of popular magazines are familiar with this type of bluff, for it always seems to land the hero in a good job, where he remains, happy and successful, ever after. Unfortunately, a good many men in business do "sell" themselves into a job with the aid of bluffing, but unlike the heroes of fiction, if one follows their subsequent careers, one finds that once the job has been won, few of them possess

sufficient ability to hold it long. With the case of the man we have been describing, however, his inferiority feeling was not a justified one and it wasn't long before he discovered he could do the work; that he did have sufficient ability to perform it well; and that his desperate but successful attempt at bluffing had been fully warranted. This job gave him a toe-hold in the business world and in ten years he headed the company.

Readers are wondering, of course, what can be done for the chronic day-dreamer and the habitual bluffer. The answer, like so many others put up to the psychiatrist, depends. For one thing, it depends on how chronic the habit is; how intense were the experiences that first called it into being; and how sincerely the patient wants to be rid of the habit. This last is very important, for there are thousands of day-dreamers and thousands of bluffers who, at heart, no matter how much they may protest otherwise, do not want to be left without the assistance of their pet devices. In fact, with a goodly number, each of these habits has been utilized so long, that it serves as a crutch—

and every one knows what happens if you take away a cripple's crutches.

Self-help in correcting these habits is likely to be a snare and a delusion. In the first place, many a dreamer and many a bluffer long years ago pushed down out of consciousness the memory of *why* they resorted to these habits to make life a little more bearable. All they are aware of now is that it is easier to imagine things are different than to face them, or that it is easier to obtain life's rewards by appearing to merit them than it is to go through all the drudgery and discomfort in a legitimate effort to win them. Consequently these persons can seldom help themselves because their insight into what the real trouble may be is so thickly protected that they fail to realize there is any trouble at all. Failure, with such persons, when it occurs, is always attributed to some other cause, remote enough from the real one to permit them to save their face and their self-esteem.

So help, then, if it is to be invoked, must usually come from some one who has had special training in understanding how to

search for the roots of the habit and not merely the symptoms. The psychiatrist, either in his private consulting room or in a mental hygiene clinic, is the logical person to extend help, and it is surprising what, even in chronic cases, he may be able to do in pointing out ways of retrieving success in many instances. The psychiatrist will be required, of course, to remove the patient's psychological crutches, but before doing so he will have shown the dreamer or the bluffer how to fashion others that will prove healthier and more efficient substitutes. The correction of these habits requires more than the exercise of "will power." The day-dreamer cannot exert sufficient will power to change his habit until the inferiority and sensitiveness that originally produced it have been conquered and so transformed as to make them serve their master's purpose. True insight first must be obtained as to just what lies behind the day-dreaming or bluffing; and until true insight is obtained, the habit will continue to impede progress like weeds that entangle a swimmer's legs.



DEPRESSIONS

Depressions, which frequently attack men and women of high mental ability, often lead to failure, though they can be cured by recognition and treatment.

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CHAPTER VII

DEPRESSIONS

ONE of the causes of failure in life is an enemy that frequently attacks men and women of high mental ability. It is a tragic fact for the world that those who are conquered by depression are often people who not only have a good mental equipment, but whose aspirations are above the average.

Most individuals who suffer from depressions do not realize that these periods of hopelessness and despair are due to a sickness of the mind which can be cured just as bodily ailments are cured. By recognition and proper treatment, potential failure may be turned into success.

One of the most interesting records of depression in the history of this country is that of Abraham Lincoln. How near the world came to being deprived of the Great Emancipator is known only to those who have made

Review of the

a study of his mental problems from a technical standpoint.

The average student of history realizes that the great Civil War President was a sad man during those rebellious days. His sadness has been immortalized by Gutzon Borglum in the monument called "The Lonely Lincoln." Here he is pictured sitting on one of the old stone benches in the White House gardens, his head bowed and his whole figure slumped in dejection. In this statue the artist did more than picture Abraham Lincoln. He charted a torturing and dangerous psychological mood.

Every historian of the Civil War has recorded Lincoln's midnight walks, his hours of pacing the east and west halls of the upper floor of the White House, his long hours of silence in the Oval Room. Many of the authors have not recognized the fact that for a long period Mr. Lincoln's depression was so definitely psychopathic that it was necessary to watch him every hour of the day and night. At one time it was considered advisable to remove all knives, scissors, and other instruments with which he might have taken his life. He wrote

and published an article on suicide. He was a man who had reached his highest ambition, a man of world importance, and despite his enemies and his political opposition, succeeded in those undertakings he believed to be the greatest works of his day. Yet at times he was burdened by the thought that life was unbearable.

He is quoted as saying that he was the most miserable man living, and "If what I feel were equally distributed to the whole human family, there would not be one cheerful face on earth. Whether or not I shall ever be better I cannot tell. I awfully forebode that I shall not live. I have done nothing to make a single human being remember that I have lived."

Lincoln's case is not an unusual one. It is repeated by the hundreds every day in the year. But it is important because it offers encouragement to every man and woman facing depression, in the knowledge that one of the best minds America has produced in a century survived periods of depression, subsequently to do its best work.

Mild depression of spirits, or "blues," may

be caused either by some temporary physical disorder or by some depressing experience, such as the upsetting behavior of lover or stock market. If the melancholy has a physical basis, the obvious thing is to discover and treat the physical cause. Many a blue Monday has changed to rose color after a dose of salts!

Even though the cause of the blues may not be physical, there are still ways to banish it, for those sufficiently clear-headed to diagnose their own minor mental ills. Aside from those due to physical causes, depressions are apt to be brought about by an occasion of inadequacy or defeat, an enhancement of one's sense of inferiority, or a realization of irreparable loss.

Once clearly recognized, such conditions may be deliberately combated. Suppose one's sales record is not as good this month as last; or one fails to close a particularly coveted contract, or loses an important law case, or makes a bad impression on the manager; in a word, suppose one meets the occasional incidental failure which is a characteristic feature of hu-

man experience—because no one is always successful. We sometimes magnify this instead of reacting favorably to it, and feel that it is an indication of our general incompetence, or of lost grip, and so on. Obviously, this is no frame of mind for boosting next month's sales or turning the next trick more successfully. Such reactions to failure beget more failures.

One may often regain composure and self-confidence in such situations by recourse to an old trick. Turn for a time to something which you can do well. Every one is a master of something. A Harvard professor who is world-famous for his achievements and popularity was once very self-disparaging. Then he accidentally discovered that he could beat all his associates at chess. This gave him a sense of assurance that helped him to give to the world a great scientific work.

Now, not every one can be a chess champion, but some can excel at golf and some at making a cake and some at music and some in entertaining children. It is a great gift to be able to recognize one's own excellences. It is

said that some men don't know when they are licked, but it is even more useful to know when one has really succeeded.

And as for the frustration and losses sustained, it is helpful to apply a revised version of the fox and the grapes. Not to call them sour, because this is an idle self-deception and cold comfort; the fox could not get the grapes, nor could he bear to face the fact that it was in himself and not in his stars, as Cassius would have told him. He might have crawled away with his tail between his legs, thinking how impotent and how worthless he was not to be able to get those grapes, shedding tears and meditating suicide. He might, on the other hand, have made various other more satisfactory solutions. He could have got a certain amount of satisfaction from smelling the grapes, if grapes it must be; or he might have jumped just a bit harder, or hunted up a box to stand on. However, a little intelligent reflection would have reminded him that grapes are poor diet for a carnivorous beast like a fox, and a beefsteak is not only more palatable but more easily obtained, and find-

ing himself baffled in what must have been a rather ludicrous spectacle—that of a fox jumping up at a cluster of grapes—he might have accepted the situation with a sense of humor and had a good laugh over the flips of fate in a puzzling but lovable old world, as he trotted down the road, looking for new worlds to conquer.

Of course these rules don't work for all temperaments. Some people can reason themselves out of the blues by looking the cause squarely in the face and realizing that nothing is final. Others gain relief by talking over their troubles with understanding friends; still others can read themselves out of their depressions. Many of the wild West and detective story magazines would have to suspend publication if it weren't for their Wall Street readers!

All of these cures apply to the "blues," the mild depression with a visible cause. They do not, in general, apply to those episodes of pervading hopelessness that overtook Lincoln and King Saul and others great and near-great and not at all great. Such depressions

are definitely recognized forms of mental illness, with which psychiatry is intimately familiar, and in the early stages they cannot be distinguished from the milder form.

These depressions need not be, and often are not, so severe as to be recognized by friends and relatives as mental illnesses. Unfortunately, they are only too apt to be ascribed to any one of a dozen false origins, and misinterpreted as to cause, nature, and consequence. "Oh, he is just worried about business affairs," is a common comment; or, "He probably has some family trouble," or, "Some love affair, I suppose." None of these adequately explains a serious depression of the type under consideration. In fact, a characteristic feature of the depressions regarded as pathological is that they are misinterpreted. The victims of the suffering (and it is terrible suffering) usually recognize this, and hence early assume that it is useless to expect help from friends and family who so totally misunderstand the situation.

Yet it is no wonder they misunderstand it, because not even the sufferer himself under-

stands it. He only knows that the world seems to grow darker and darker, until the path before him is scarcely discernible, and each step is slow and painful. He may, and often does, ascribe it to this or that cause, but his explanations are as inadequate and inappropriate as those of his sympathetic but puzzled friends. Often he recognizes that his anguish is a recurrent phase of what he has learned to regard as a constitutional tendency, but as to its real causes or basis he is always ignorant.

This, in theory, distinguishes the "depressions" of the morbid type from grief of what may be called a normal type, such as that of the man who suffers sorrow and has a definite external cause for it. Of this cause and its relationship he is clearly conscious, and time rapidly heals the wound. Grief rarely, if ever, produces failure.

But the melancholiac suffers sorrow for which the cause is internal rather than external; it is indefinite rather than definite; its causes are unconscious rather than conscious, and the suffering up to a certain point grows greater rather than less with time. Environ-

mental factors may contribute, may precipitate it, but the real causes are deeply buried and hidden even from the sufferer.

Such morbid depressions, or states of melancholy, are frequently the cause of inexplicable but preventive failure in the lives of our best citizens—failures in business, in school, in home life, in love affairs, in all the activities of human endeavor. Such failures are capable of better understanding, better handling, and frequent averting, granted a more widespread familiarity with the nature of the foe.

These depressions begin insidiously. In the extreme states some patients are too overwhelmed to eat or speak, and others are agitated by the terror of their thoughts. After some weeks or months the cloud passes. Little by little the false ideas disappear; the ordinary ways of life and the customary attitudes toward things and persons return. The old "pep" comes back and the patient becomes just as well as he ever was in his life. He realizes that he has passed through a morbid period, recalls much of his suffering but is loath to discuss it, and is glad to go on in the former happy

channels of life as if nothing had happened.

Such cases as these are exceedingly numerous. At their worst they are, of course, easy to recognize. But in the early stages and in mild cases throughout the cycle of depression they frequently fail of recognition until too late to avert the tragedies of failure which are almost sure to occur. These tragedies are of various sorts. Suicide is, of course, a common one, but there are others, usually due as much to the misunderstanding of the situation by outsiders as to the condition of the patient.

There, for instance, was the tragedy of George D. On a certain afternoon not many months ago he sat staring despondently at his desk. It was piled high with work. It seemed to him like an insurmountable mountain. For weeks the world had been growing daily more drab and dreary. Everything seemed too hard. Tasks that he would ordinarily have run through within short order seemed totally beyond him. The most pressing matters were no more stimulus to his energy than the most trifling; it all seemed useless, futile, impossible. He had no interest in anything—just the

PROPERTY

booming in his ears and the dreadful weight on his chest. He felt as if he were sinking into quicksands of immobility, his will paralyzed, his head leaden.

The telephone had been ringing, but he heard it only as a faint and irrelevant tinkle. His secretary had spoken to him twice, but the effort of acknowledgment was too great. He made no reply, but sat silently brooding.

Finally he caught her words, . . . "that appointment with the president." He felt as if tons of coal had been dumped in upon him, burying him in a black abyss of helplessness. He recalled that this interview probably meant his promotion, but this horrified him. "How utterly incapable and unworthy I am!" he thought to himself. The mere thought of the effort required to cross the office appalled him, but as the lesser of two evils he struggled to his feet, took his hat and, hurrying down the hall to the elevator, he left the building.

In an adjoining room the president was in conference with other executives. "But I don't see why he doesn't come," he was saying. "He

is usually so prompt. And especially to-day when—”

“He has been looking a little bad here lately,” volunteered one. “A little glum and pepless. And letting his work pile up.”

“It’s one of his slumps. He’s the best executive we’ve ever had in this office—turns out more work—and better work—and makes more contacts—and puts into operation more ideas than—”

“Until he gets one of his slumps. Then he’s no good. He’s had ’em before.”

“Family trouble, I suppose.”

“It couldn’t be. Everything’s perfect there. Exceptionally happy. Worships his children. And her, too. I don’t know what it could be.”

“Oh, he’s probably overworked himself and needs a rest. Let’s include a vacation in this promotion.”

“Yes, when he learns his salary is to be doubled he’ll cheer up.”

“But why on earth doesn’t he come?”

That evening the papers contained the following item:

Mr. George D., of the Commonwealth Company, was found dead in the basement of his residence this afternoon, where he evidently had hanged himself. His wife and children were out. Ill health is believed to have been the cause.

This was a tragedy which could have been prevented if D. had recognized that his depression had no real basis in fact, but was a mild form of mental disorder which could be cured.

Walter H., another real man, gives the other side of the picture. At the time our story begins H. had just been promoted to the position of manager of a chain of grocery stores. For six months he had filled the new position with credit to himself and profit to the management. "Suddenly," as he put it, "something seemed to break; everything slowed up; I couldn't work as fast as usual; I lost my pep. I didn't want to see any one and I thought they didn't want to see me."

Thinking his work to be responsible for his depression, he gave it up and tried one job after another, giving each up in the same way. He grew increasingly depressed. "The whole

world seemed very dark, very dark. And all life seemed useless and purposeless." Vague fears of various sorts assailed him—that the theater where he sat would be burned down, that he was infecting people around him with disease, that he had lost his chance forever in the business world, that he was to be poisoned, that he was losing his mind. He decided to kill himself by jumping in front of a train.

Severe as this case sounds, the treatment was not very difficult. Mr. H. consulted a psychiatrist, who had many conferences with him, pointing out the psychological factors underlying his sudden panic and depression and tracing them back to childhood experiences which tended to undermine his self-confidence in certain situations. He was counseled to give up his work entirely for a year and put himself passively in the hands of certain intelligent friends, who were given specific instructions as to how they could best help him overcome his depression. Travel of all kinds was absolutely prohibited, and quiet seclusion, with constant but unobtrusive companionship, was provided for. A year later he was his old self

again, had reëstablished himself in business, and was doing as well as or better than before.

Warren F. went through a similar experience and came out on top. He had gone into partnership with a well-meaning but reckless partner who involved them rather heavily. The business was bearing up all right in spite of this stress, but F. became convinced that they were ruined. He could not be persuaded that there was any reason for optimism. He began to fear that he was already bankrupt and was operating fraudulently, and the idea came to him that he might be put in the penitentiary. He would break down and cry at times. When he could be persuaded to talk at all he would go over and over the items of business which he thought proved that they were failing. After two months in a psychiatric hospital, with isolation from his relatives and the best physical and medicinal treatment, he had recovered sufficiently to go home, and a month later his physician wrote: "You would not know that Mr. F. was the same man; he is cheerful and industrious, and

seems to have no cares nor worries in the world."

Horace L., although a son of well-to-do parents, had largely supported himself since the age of nineteen. He was a handsome, amiable lad, and very popular in his department of a large commercial house. When he was twenty-four years old he was promoted to a better job in a branch office with a 50 per cent. increase in salary.

The new tasks seemed to upset him completely. He felt increasingly incapable of holding the job; complained bitterly of various features connected with it; came home several times on visits, and was finally discharged by his employers, who regarded him as inexplicably lazy and incompetent.

The picture of melancholia became increasingly obvious to every one after his discharge. He talked constantly about his failure, his disgrace, his loss of prestige, the hopelessness of his position, the emptiness of the future. He broke his engagement to be married and gave up all social life. To his parents' amazement, he frankly confessed when questioned by a

physician that he would like to kill himself.

Six months later, after treatment in a sanitarium, he was in active business life again and taking part in social activities as enthusiastically as ever.

Averil H. had suffered for years with stomach trouble. Then a skilful surgeon performed an operation which completely cured him of his long-standing suffering. He went back to his work as manager of a store, the most of which he owned, with the feeling that now he could really accomplish something. Averil found, however, that he had difficulty in making decisions, felt inclined to call upon others for help and advice, and was increasingly put to it to clean up the daily routine. He began to worry about all this and about everything that he did and had done. He began to feel that he wouldn't be able to support his family, and became distressed and agitated at the most insignificant remarks and episodes. So he decided he must sell his business, and did so at a loss.

Later this man went from place to place seeking health, but after consulting physicians

and being given advice he always refused to take it and went somewhere else.

The case illustrates a phenomenon frequently observed that some people seem to be obliged to carry with them some form of suffering, so that if one affliction is taken from them they straightway develop another. Operations are rarely advisable for nervous patients, as they are frequently followed by depressions, particularly if the operation is successful in its immediate objective. This is to be explained purely on a psychological basis too complicated to be analyzed here. In any particular case, however, it is of the utmost importance from the standpoint of preventing the recurrence of these attacks for the patient to work out analytically the psychological mechanisms which cause him to penalize himself in this way; this can be done in many instances, but it is generally agreed among psychiatrists that no attempt should be made to do it during the height of a depression. In other words, the time to treat depressions by psychological means is when the patient is not depressed.

Failures in school because of pathological depression are rarely noted before high school. Occasionally, however, children in the grades suffer from unmistakable episodes of depression which should be danger signals demanding immediate investigation of the most skillful sort.

In high school and college there are surprisingly many instances of depression among the students. The attention of the public has been called to this fact during the last year by the spectacular emphasis on the frequency of suicides among college students. In the acute pressure of the readjustment of their lives to the strenuous requirements of a critical age period, college students do experience many stresses and strains and present many problems of mental ill health, of which suicide is an occasional disastrous termination. The great mass of distress which leads up to these spectacular failures is usually overlooked by the public, which concerns itself only with sensational news. For it must always be borne in mind that suicide is never the first act of the tragedy.

The depressions of college students are ostensibly associated with a variety of causes—difficulties in scholastic achievement, social dissatisfactions, infrequency of dates with the opposite sex, athletic disappointments, etc. As in all cases, however, these ostensible causes are not sufficient to explain the picture. Frequently a student thinks he is blue because he has not made the football team, whereas, in reality, his failure to make the football team has been caused by his dispiritedness.

Joe G. was only fourteen years old, had finished the eighth grade, and was ready for high school. He had worked all summer in a store and felt very proud of himself. But during the latter part of the summer he began poring over his books and seemed worried lest he would be unable to do his school work.

One day after dinner he suddenly began to cry and told his father he wasn't well. He went to bed but couldn't sleep. He got up for a drink, threw his arms about his father, said he was nervous and sick and didn't want to go to school, couldn't get his algebra, couldn't bear to face his schoolmates, and was wor-

ried over the shocking things about sex that he had heard from other boys—things that he ought not to know about and was sorry that he did know about. "Feel my heart," he said; "my teeth are bad; my lungs are bad. I'm going to die, I know I am." His depression finally became so acute that he had to be removed from school and placed under special treatment for the winter.

Disappointments in love and unhappy family life are often associated with depressions. An example of this was Laura P., brought up rigorously by a strict Puritanical mother from whose domination she had always resolved some day to escape. Her opportunity came when she took a position away from home as secretary to the president of a manufacturing concern. Laura became tremendously enamored of her employer, chiefly because he was a bold, ruthless man and seemed strong enough to compel her to do anything he wanted her to do. Although he had said nothing about marrying her, she felt confident that this was his intention—only to be thrown into a state of great distress when she

obtained reliable information as to his unfaithfulness. She was sure that her name was linked with his in the mouths of the town gossips, and that she would be classed with the women of questionable reputation with whom he was reported to have consorted. She began to regret intensely the various occasions upon which she had been with him, at the same time clinging doggedly to her original love for him.

Soon Laura found herself increasingly incapable of thinking of anything but the affair. She talked about it to every one who would listen. She took position after position in other cities, but had to resign from each of them on account of her nervousness. She became increasingly careless about her personal appearance and seemed to slump in every way, until instead of a neat, efficient, active young girl, she was a sloppy, garrulous, erratic, lugubrious "old woman" of thirty.

Her depression completely paralyzed her efforts for the next two years. Then at the insistence of her family she placed herself under psychiatric treatment and eight months

later was improved to such a degree that she interested and won the love of a young business man, was married to him, and resumed her place in the world with the same emotional poise as before.

It should never be forgotten that even the most profound melancholia has a beginning, and the beginnings of these depressions are usually slow and insidious—a slight inactivity, a suggestion of undue preoccupation, a little sleep disturbance; later a slight loss of appetite and weight, a suggestion of restlessness or irritability, *obsessive* worry. Then come feelings of inadequacy, uselessness, futility, wrongness, sinfulness, poverty, etc. A common symptom—always an important one in mental health consideration—is a loss of interest in things, with usually a corresponding loss of efficiency.

All depressions are not melancholias. The picture of melancholia may occur as a result of a tumor or growth in the brain, or as the manifestation of syphilis of the nervous system, or as a form of neurosis. It also occurs occasionally in several other conditions. The

most frequent form is due to none of these, but to a recognized mental disturbance arising from unconscious psychological processes, definitely influenced by hereditary constitution and perhaps by malfunctioning of the endocrine glands. The task of diagnosis is for the physician; it is enough for the public to know that melancholy is a condition, manifested as above described, capable of serious consequences, arising upon different bases, susceptible of scientific diagnosis and treatment.

Treatment of the proper sort is exceedingly important, because the great majority of these cases recover. This recovery sometimes occurs under the worst of conditions—i. e., the patient gets well in spite of misunderstanding, mishandling, and mistreatment. It is obviously better, however, to give him the best possible treatment for the expediting of this recovery. This usually means isolation, protection against visitors (even relatives), physical support, the best of food, careful nursing, a variable amount of sedation by baths, electricity, and medicines, and, above all, psychotherapy of the right sort. Those cases in which an or-

ganic disease process is a factor require still more specific treatment.

Finally, it should be a matter of common knowledge that all depressed people are potential suicides! Hence the importance of protection as a factor in treatment. Many of the suicides ascribed in the newspapers to financial worry, disappointment, etc., are undoubted cases of melancholia from which the victims probably would have recovered and gone on to useful lives had their conditions been recognized and the proper steps taken by their friends or relatives. If suicidal thoughts occur to you, you owe it to yourself, your family and the world to tell some one about it whose emotions are stable enough and whose judgment is good enough to guide you through the shoals of danger.

Suicide is a serious problem in the United States. With all the clamor about crime waves, few realize that murder is of much less frequent occurrence than suicide. Moreover, the victims of suicide are, generally speaking, far more desirable members of society than the victims of murder. Many of the latter are

underworldlings, killed in quarrels or arrests; whereas the victims of melancholia—many of whom attempt and not a few of whom succeed in suicide—are usually of a distinctly higher order. Animals frequently commit murder, but suicide is the product of higher—however erroneous—mentality. Most suicides could be prevented if the psychopathological view of it were only more widely known.

Every psychiatrist has scores of experiences like this: Mr. X. was told that his son's so-called "nervousness" was really a manifestation of a melancholia and that he might kill himself if he were not watched, preferably confined in a sanitarium. Mr. X. scoffed at the idea of so intelligent, sensible, and seemingly self-controlled a man as his son doing such a thing.

Six days later the son was found hanging from a rafter. The papers said he was worried over finances. The suicide statistics listed it as caused by ill health. The father regarded it as an inexplicable tragedy. The psychiatrist sees it as another instance of preventable

suicide which ought to be called manslaughter.

In addition to the acute depressions which have been the main consideration in this article, there is a form of chronic melancholy with which every one is familiar, but which is rarely regarded as a mental sickness, although it would undoubtedly constitute one. Such persons are apt to be consistently and unfailingly moody, grouchy, irritable, and pessimistic. Curiously enough, these people are not so likely to fail as to succeed, using the words in their commonly accepted sense. They often achieve considerable distinction and accumulate wealth. Their failure consists in their total incapacity to enjoy life. They are never happy, and because of their cross and disagreeable dispositions they make those about them unhappy as well. For this reason they constitute an important problem in industry—the chronically depressed employee requiring very special handling.

Some who read this may ask what personal applications they may make—how may they handle themselves in the throes of minor de-

pressions which none but they themselves recognize?

The answer is not simple. The ideal of serenity in the face of all events, of equanimity, is an impossible one for some temperaments. Try as they may, they cannot "treat those two impostors just the same," but must overreact to both success (so called) and failure. But there is some help in the thought that comforted Lincoln, that "This, too, will pass." Religion of some kind; the love of something ineffable—God, beauty, nature, the devotion to a task—these save some from depression. Some think that it is the relinquishing of the intensity of religious faith or its failure to engross its adherents as formerly that has brought about the increased number of depressions in these latter days. There are fewer now who can say with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Job and Jesus knew grief, but not melancholy.

In general, the thing for the melancholy man to do is to seek the most proficient counsel available and act upon the advice given.

Modern psychiatry has developed to a point comparable with the better known and more spectacular achievements of major surgery. Surgery of the mind is often as necessary and as feasible as surgery of the abdomen.

BEATING HANDICAPS

The halls of fame are filled with those who have triumphed over great physical defects. The average person can also turn his handicaps into assets if he will use them as a challenge to success, not as an excuse for failure.

BY

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CHAPTER VIII

BEATING HANDICAPS

MUCH of the important work of the world is being done by people with physical handicaps. I have seen a blind man administering the office of one of the most important judicial medical bodies in the United States—the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry. By self-education he has triumphed over his deformity. A boy without arms has been aided by reconstructive surgery and is now able to earn his own living. A physician with a double dislocation of the hips from birth is one of the leading men in his specialty and wins consistently in medical golf tournaments.

It is a hopeful fact that a physical handicap may be turned into a definite asset. Perhaps Robert Louis Stevenson would never have given this world his rare contributions to literature if he had had a perfect, vigorous physical body. Somerset Maugham might

never have written "Of Human Bondage," that marvelous psychological study of the boy with the club-foot, if he had not had himself some of the trials that come to those with a defect. Milton, thrown back upon himself by blindness, enlarged a vision and a potential genius which enriched all succeeding generations. Elizabeth Browning, with an incurable spinal affliction as a background, achieved fame.

But this discussion does not concern primarily the effects of physical handicaps on genius. Many of the rules that apply to the unusually gifted are equally effective with the average or ordinary men or women—the people who keep moving this work-a-day world. How many of them are fighting a losing battle due to a physical handicap, because of a lack of intelligent reshaping of their careers, habits and attitude toward life? How many are there who have been thrown, by sudden illness or accident, out of the class of the approximately normal? Every day, in the offices of physicians, patients come and reveal sadly or triumphantly the stories of their strug-

gles against handicaps, leading to failure or success.

"I was," said one man, "the only child in a well-to-do family. As a youngster I was strong and active, interested in all kinds of games and sports. I made good in the school football team, had a fine straight body, and admired strong men.

"When I was sixteen years old my family met with financial reverses. The same year an accident left me a cripple, and for twelve months I was kept in bed. During that time I continually looked forward to the day when I could again play tennis, run, take my place in school sports. Eventually it was gently intimated to me that, though I might walk, I could never do any of these really active things again.

"In the years that followed I had to stand on the side lines and watch other boys doing the things that I thought I most wanted to do."

Many a boy, left to lie in bed and meditate on his deficiency, struggling against the malevolent accident that fixes him for weeks in

a recumbent posture, becomes mentally crippled and embittered. But this boy had wise guardians. One by one other interests were brought to him. He was encouraged to write and to study languages. He was given the right kind of books to read—things which would, along with his class work, interest him in acquiring a good education.

As a result he developed an ambition to go to college. By the time he was ready to enter Princeton, however, there wasn't enough money to realize this dream, so he began writing for a newspaper and attempted to work his way through college.

"The greatest difficulty I had to face," he says, "was the shielding attitude of my friends and associates, who trailed along with me a pitying cloak of protection. The result of this was that I put an unnecessary strain on myself in order to appear more vigorous than I really was. Early in life I had been taught to avoid coddling and to flee from sympathy. It was the wisest friend of my life who taught me that lesson."

The man with a handicap lives outside of

himself and must forever keep a barrier between himself and those who in love attempt to build up protective walls. For one of them to have only one leg, or one eye, or one ear is not so important a difference between two persons with equal mental ability. A *consciousness* of this difference is the most dangerous element in the handicap. Early in his work this boy began to associate with those who would treat him as one of their own group on an equal footing and without giving him an advantage because of his handicap.

"After two years in college I found myself broken in health. I was not only a cripple; I had developed tuberculosis. But the depression that followed this knowledge was short lived, because I realized that now a final decision had to be made, and from then on I had to travel an absolutely new road.

"In doing this I chose for my associates normal, healthy persons who were not particularly concerned about me. It was necessary for me to go to a tuberculosis center, and I refused to take any member of my family, whose constant anxiety and tenderness would

be a factor in determining my own mental attitude. I did this under wise counsel. I belong to a high-strung, emotional family. My relatives were the kind of people who, regardless of what they might say, would have shown by the expression of their faces their constant sense of tragedy. I had to be a man, to stand alone, and to establish my own respect."

It cannot be overemphasized that the handicapped person must demand from his friends and associates a normal attitude toward him, and must flee from pity and sympathy as his worst enemies.

"When I reached the place chosen for my cure I went into the cheapest possible sanitarium. Psychologically, this was good for me, because I felt that with the small amount of money I had borrowed with which to buy back my health I was playing a sporting game with the people who had backed me. The details of my agony in the tuberculosis camp need not be told here, but I deliberately determined to drop a curtain between me and the tragedy before me. I put cotton in my ears

to keep from hearing the complaints of unhappy persons around me. I sat alone and read. I got acquainted with only those who could face what I was having to face and smile doing it. This sounds cold-blooded, but it meant life or death to me, and I was in no position to help others.

"At the end of two months I obtained a small position in the town. Here I was confronted by another psychological problem. No one wanted a 'T. B.' in the house. It was difficult to get room and board, except in places which already sheltered the hopelessly sick."

What the handicapped needs more than any other one thing in life is association with normal people. This boy finally found a place and continued to live there until he was sufficiently well to go back to his own home town.

He was well equipped to handle the first job he tried to get, but it was tactfully and kindly refused him. He understood the real reason. That company did not want the risk of a broken employee or a former "T. B." man in the office.

"I was depressed," he says, "for days by

this set-back. I had been warned early in my health education that such experiences awaited all 'T. B.' come-backs, but I felt physically fit and looked well, weighed more than I had ever weighed in my life, and felt that if under all these excellent conditions I was rejected, there might be small chance for me to make good when the inevitable happened under hard work and I lost some of my extra weight.

"However, I gritted my teeth and went for job after job until I landed one. That winter every other man in the office had colds without being reproached, but the first time I sneezed or coughed my employer began to look worried."

Because of the attitude of his employer, the man kept at work when a heavy cold overtook him, stayed on the job with a second cold, and actually never had an equal chance with the other employees in the office to get back on his feet.

Before the spring had come he faced another breakdown. This time he went to North Carolina, where he found work helping an

advertising man and reading proof on manuscripts.

It was twice as hard for him to get a job the second time he came home. Lame and a "lunger," he was a bad risk for any corporation, but finally he obtained a humble position. He determined to hold it, so he cut himself off from all dissipation, avoided the crowd that wanted to play at night, went to bed early, even when theater passes were offered him, and lived with normal people who did not concern themselves especially about his health. Necessity had taught him the best of health habits.

Finally this man began to make good at his job; the first important triumph over weakness was when he learned to drive a car. He could no longer play tennis and had given up golf, but despite lameness and one bad lung, he could drive. It was a psychological victory. He was to learn that the important thing for him to do was to establish in his own mind a confidence in his ability to do things most people felt he could not do because of his handicap. For the same reason he learned to speak

in public, took an interest in politics and participated in political campaign speechmaking. He was jealous of the use of his energies, except where they counted; then he spent extravagantly.

Step by step he went up in his work until he had reached a position of power and large income.

"My biggest triumph," he says, "was achieved the day I knew it was no longer necessary for me to surround myself with healthy, stimulating people. I no longer needed a crutch, but could be one myself."

In the records of modern achievement are many other examples of conspicuous triumphs over physical defects. Steinmetz, whose reputation has reached the most backward of nations, whose genius has lightened the burden of man and increased the efficiency of industry, came to this country a poor, grotesquely deformed boy. Thrown back on himself, he developed all of his mental qualities, something few human beings ever do, since it is estimated that the average man uses only 40 per cent. of his mental ability. Far more interest-

ing, if not more important than the record of his successful achievements, would be an accurate history of his psychological evolution and day-by-day struggle to triumph over nature's abuse of him.

One of the country's great physicians was refused without any explanation an internship at one of New York's largest hospitals. The real cause was a birthmark which covered half his face. When he found out the reason for his rejection he obtained an appointment at a smaller hospital, and later helped by his brilliant work in cancer surgery to establish a wide reputation for the institution as well as for himself. He learned how to take off birthmarks with the X-ray and removed half of his own. The rest remains, perhaps as a living demonstration of how a physical handicap may be conquered.

Sir James M. Barrie wrote the whimsical play "Mary Rose" with his left hand during an attack of neuritis. He explains the nature of the piece which has made all England weep, as follows: "I wrote the play with my left hand, and things which come down your

left arm would never come down your right."

Though genius can triumph over almost any defect, it is obvious that the ordinary man has a better chance for success if he can correct his defects or, better still, prevent them. If his defect is incurable he can often win by making a careful study of the situation and adapting his mode of living and his occupation to his limitations.

In the last few years science and many organizations have done much to help in this line. A striking example was the great anti-hookworm investigation and campaign carried on by the Rockefeller Foundation in the southern portions of the United States, where studies of mentality were made along with the physical studies. Persons having hookworm were found to be of retarded mentality, sluggish and apathetic. The treatment renewed the growth of the body and wrought in many instances a complete change in character. Some of the distinctly backward boys later became successful executives.

One of the chief functions of modern medicine in the rehabilitation of the disabled is

to find out exactly how much and what kind of work each disabled person can do. When this has been determined, there are many organizations which exist for the purpose of connecting him with the right kind of job.

Is he hard of hearing, so that a position which requires constant communication with others puts him at a hopeless disadvantage? The leagues for the hard of hearing, local organizations all over the country, will test his hearing by the most up-to-date methods, teach him, if necessary, to supplement it with lip reading, tell him what job he can hold with credit, and help him to obtain it. No deafened person need withdraw despairingly into the isolation of silence. This is a physical defect which, as Beethoven has proved, need not conquer even a musician.

Or is the handicapped person one of the increasingly large army of people with some form of heart disease? The American Heart Association has been organized to assist him. Doctors cannot, in many instances, cure heart disease, but they can greatly prolong the lives and usefulness of those suffering from the ail-

ment who will follow their advice. Many persons have been converted from invalids to economic successes by changing their jobs, on medical advice, to others better adapted to their heart limitations and by faithful following of health programs planned for them.

How the physical deficiency of tuberculosis can be overcome is illustrated by the first case I have quoted. The fight against tuberculosis is one of the most glorious chapters in the history of preventive medicine, and no one who discovers that he has it need look upon himself as a potential failure. History is studded with brilliant examples of those who have "come back."

At a dinner held two years ago by the National Tuberculosis Association, one table was occupied by twenty-four men and women who had had tuberculosis, had come back, and had then achieved conspicuous success in many fields. Among the group were the head of a large publishing house, a great surgeon, a great physician, a popular writer, and many others.

A physical defect will either make or break. To the weak it is an excuse. To the strong man

or woman it is a spur, a challenge, a sporting proposition. In the game of life, the real winner is not the person who demands that the odds be all in his favor.

HANDICAP—OR ALIBI?

Many people are keeping themselves from success by imaginary handicaps which could be overcome if they did not offer too good an excuse for laziness or evading responsibility.

BY

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CHAPTER IX

HANDICAP—OR ALIBI?

PHYSICAL handicaps may be divided roughly into two classes—those that are real and those that are simply alibis.

In the second class are ailments of all kinds which would be overcome if they did not offer too good an excuse for getting out of something disagreeable. To this group belong a number of so-called physical diseases which are wished on people by their subconscious minds. Such sickness seems real enough to the sufferer, but when the mental condition that produced it has been corrected, the physical disease also disappears.

At a recent annual meeting of the American Medical Association in Washington, a whole session of its largest section was devoted to the mental and emotional causes of disease. At that time one of the doctors whose specialty

was diseases of the digestive tract made the statement that approximately one third of the patients who consulted him in his office had no discoverable organic disorder. Similar statements were made by other physicians present.

The application of these facts to business success is obvious. Many a man or woman allows a fancied handicap to tie his hands—to serve as an excuse for idleness, so that its possessor will not have to make any further effort in the struggle to get along. This is a very common phenomenon, because it arises from that tendency, possessed by all of us to a greater or less degree, to “take things easy” if we find a good excuse for doing so. The person who gets from an insurance company sick benefits that almost equal his wages is apt to make a very slow or incomplete recovery. Indeed, creating an invalid of the beneficiary is a well-recognized danger of all accident and sick insurance. It is surprising how sick a person will remain who is suing for alleged damages and how rapidly he may get well when the suit is settled!

In the matter of pensions and sick benefits,

it is true that there is a certain group of individuals for whom the premium of a steady compensation during illness is too much and who are unable to get well so long as they are, as it were, paid for being sick. This group is probably not as large as it is supposed to be, because persons who react in this way are often essentially poor risks at best, and this method of reaction is indicative of their faulty personality make-up.

For the most part, therefore, they should not be treated as if they were consciously malingering. It would be better if the pension or the sick benefit, as the case may be, could be used by the physician as one of his therapeutic aids, so that he could withdraw it in part or in whole as he saw fit and as he felt the strength of the patient would permit, rather than have to certify that the person needed it or did not need it, and in the latter instance have the patient confronted with the necessity of giving it up all at once and permanently. The law, however, generally regulates these things in an all too rigid way for the best interests of the sick.

In these cases, being ill seems a paying proposition to the sufferer, though he may not admit this line of reasoning even to himself. What he unfortunately does not realize is that his "alibi" is not only hurting his chances of success in business, but insidiously undermining his character. In the end his "sickness" is a costly procedure. Success in life does not come by yielding to defeat, but by surmounting it. Strength of character results from overcoming obstacles, just as strength of muscle comes by doing physical work.

When an individual is confronted by a task that seems overwhelming, and has done everything he can to get out of it without succeeding, there are only two avenues left which are available. He has to choose between failure and doing the job. If he is able to bring himself to the latter decision and can carry it through to a successful issue, he of necessity not only feels great relief, but he is much stimulated by proving to himself his ability, which he had so seriously doubted. This is the premium of success, which enables him to tackle his next difficult task with addi-

tional confidence, and so is a stepping-stone to further accomplishments.

This mechanism is very easily seen in various forms of physical handicaps. I remember the instance of a machinist who lost some of his fingers and felt that thereafter he never would be able to do his work again. As a result of continuous effort, however, he not only succeeded in carrying on but developed a pride in having succeeded in the face of such a serious handicap, thus turning the handicap into an asset. This conversion of liabilities into assets is one of the great possibilities that confront the handicapped individual.

I recall a very wonderful man, the late F. B. Gilbreth of Providence, Rhode Island, who had had a number of serious physical injuries himself and in consequence became interested in the physically handicapped, and in developing ways of overcoming their several physical problems. In the course of his life he collected the biographies of innumerable people who had had serious physical injuries, such as the loss of limbs, but who had nevertheless succeeded; and when an individ-

ual came to him, for example, who had lost a leg or an arm and for whom this missing member seemed absolutely essential, he could reach up to his library of biographies and pull out one of a person who had followed the same occupation and been similarly handicapped, but who had nevertheless succeeded. The method by which he had been able to effect this result was recounted in detail. The effect of such an example can be easily appreciated.

In the great moving-picture industry at Hollywood tens of thousands of people are employed, and for screening purpose all sorts and conditions of men are desirable. There are always places for the very tall or the very short, the very fat or the very lean, the very homely as well as the very beautiful, so that many people who have considered themselves seriously handicapped because of their physical make-up are now finding that very handicap itself has become the particular asset that enables them to succeed.

Of course, most of us who use real or fancied sickness as an excuse for shirking life's responsibilities do not realize that we are do-

ing so. The habit creeps upon us insidiously, and often gains a foothold before it is recognized. A person who has a disagreeable task to perform discovers that he has a headache. The headache serves as a good excuse for avoiding the task. Thereafter it becomes increasingly easy to develop a headache whenever there is something unpleasant to be done.

This kind of illness appears in many guises. The individual who is approaching a distasteful piece of work, for instance, is often under strong emotion, which shows itself in palpitation of the heart, sweating, gastric acidity, diarrhea, headache, pain in some part of the body, feelings of weakness and lassitude, and loss of pep. All such symptoms serve to make him feel ill, and this feeling of illness is a good excuse to get out of the task. Later the illness has to be kept up in order to go on avoiding the issue.

Such a state of affairs often looks to the outside observer as if it were consciously assumed, and so people who suffer in this way are not infrequently written down as malingerers and treated accordingly. As a matter of

fact, these difficulties arise in the field of the emotions and not in the field of the consciously and intellectually clearly perceived. They are the instinctive reactions of states of feeling and not clearly visualized schemes for attaining definitely conceived goals.

Perhaps the best sort of illustration that might be given to show that malingering is by no means an adequate explanation of such symptoms could be taken from the realm of what are known as the prison psychoses—namely, those mental illnesses that develop as the result of being imprisoned. I have in mind a colored man who was sentenced for life for stabbing and killing a man in a quarrel over a woman at a picnic.

Without going into details, I will just state briefly how his psychology has been affected by his experience. It is obvious that the only solution of his life problem which would be satisfying to him would be to attain his freedom. It is about as equally obvious that this freedom will not be forthcoming unless perchance it should be discovered that he is innocent of the crime of which he was convicted.

Now see the peculiar ideas that he develops in straining toward this goal, not as the result of any conscious realization of these factors—which I am sure he does not have, as he is a man of very limited intelligence—but as a result of the feeling urge toward freedom.

He believes, in the first place, that he is not guilty, that a serious mistake was made on the part of the authorities, and in order to emphasize this idea to its full extent and make it as potent as possible, he has come to believe that he is not only *not* the person who committed the homicide, but that he is not really a colored man! To account for the obvious fact that his skin is dark, he says that he was employed in the United States secret service and in his capacity as a detective he found it expedient to disguise himself, that he chose to disguise himself as a colored person and applied a stain to his skin for that purpose. Having done this, unfortunately he could not remove the stain and therefore it was easy to mistake him for the person who committed the homicide, particularly as he has the same name. The reasoning is therefore exceedingly

logical. He, a white man, temporarily disguised as a colored person and having the same name as the individual who actually committed the homicide, is mistaken for that person, arrested, and sentenced. His freedom naturally only awaits a recognition of this error upon the part of the authorities.

Probably no one would contend that such symptoms were consciously assumed. In this particular instance the ramifications are such as to make such an assumption utterly impossible, but they show precisely the same construction as if they were, and they have the same objective—namely, the avoidance of a disagreeable situation. No amount of argument would convince him that he is wrong, because if he were convinced, hope would immediately depart from his life. This is of course an extreme illustration, but it is by such extreme cases that the mechanisms involved in less obvious and more obscure cases are made clearly understandable.

The host of people who have minor illnesses that are constructed in the same way are often almost if not quite as unconscious of the

roots of these illnesses and how they have come to pass, but if they are not confronted by some absolutely fateful situation which is unchangeable, as they usually are not, the solution of their difficulties can be brought about and their return to health result.

If the people who unconsciously try to shirk work in the same way could realize that they are really using up as much energy in staying sick as would be needed for the successful accomplishment of the task that confronts them, they would soon be up and doing—well and successful instead of ill and dependent. In such cases the easiest way is not really the easiest way; it only appears to be.

By a process which we call "rationalization," such people persuade themselves that they are justified in such a course. A certain young woman, for instance, had been in a train wreck and was badly shaken up. She sued the company for an injury alleged to have been sustained to her spine. In spite of the fact that no one could find any convincing evidence of physical harm, her constant complaint of pain and her obvious incapacity



resulted in a substantial verdict by the jury.

Upon the collection of the damages, however, she did not at once get well, as is presumed to be the result in such cases, but kept consulting physicians about her back. Finally she found a surgeon who performed a major operation of a most serious nature upon her spine. After the operation she recovered, although at the operation nothing wrong was found with the spine or the spinal cord.

What is the explanation? All along, in the back of her head, she knew she had not really sustained an injury and was not honestly entitled to the damages awarded. In other words, she had a guilty conscience. She really should have given the money back. This she could not do, but she could punish herself for her dishonesty, and this she succeeded in doing by submitting to a major operation with all its attendant suffering.

Conscience is a very real quality with which we have to deal, and we cannot offend it without paying the price. In this case the price was physical suffering; in the other cases it may have been loss of self-respect. When we offend

our own ideals a state of disequilibrium is established, and the only way to reestablish equilibrium is by suffering the consequences, which in a very real sense is making the punishment fit the crime. In order to be well, to be happy, and to be successful we must at least be true to our own standards and ideals.

Physical illnesses may therefore be used not only as alibis for lying down on the job, but may even be created for that purpose. When so used or created, they inevitably exact their toll in physical and mental suffering. All of this shows the value of being vitally interested in our work. Many a person who has been seriously handicapped by physical illness has nevertheless succeeded in a large way because his interest in what he desired to accomplish so outweighed any obstacle, that nothing was permitted to stand in the way; and the amazing thing in many such instances is that as one of the results of such success the illness, whatever it was, has improved, often giving place to health and happiness. There is no tonic like success.

Such considerations teach us how important

it is, in bringing up children, or in directing boys and girls to their first jobs, that those jobs should be congenial, that the young people should really want to do them, that they should love them, and that the jobs should not be of a nature beyond their powers of accomplishment. For if people fail at the very beginning, they are, from the first, damned, as it were, by a spirit of helplessness and discouragement; if they succeed, they are stimulated and encouraged to further endeavor.

All of us have to do many things we do not like and do not want to do. This is the drudgery of existence. It is important, however, that life should not be all drudgery, but that we should each have some task, some hobby, that we love and that we can cultivate at odd times. The drudgery of life can oftentimes be successfully negotiated if the individual realizes that a goal which he very much desires can be reached only as a result of the successful overcoming of the numerous obstacles that drudgery represents.

There is no royal road to success. The capacity for continuity of application is an

exceedingly important characteristic to develop, and among thousands who fail, a very considerable number are found who cannot stay at any one job for any length of time, partly because the returns do not come in fast enough to suit their impatience. Many of these individuals are essentially brilliant, but they lack the capacity for continuity. Many a business man who has retired at an advanced age in the expectation that he would now find a much-needed and well-earned rest has promptly died, simply because without his business he found himself with no vital interest in living. Had he but possessed a hobby to turn to, he could have gone on and lived for years, not only happily but usefully.

The person who wishes to succeed should associate with successful people.

Our interests and ideals are built up largely as the result of our associations. It is therefore important to be with those who have vital and compelling interests in life and who are successful. We thereby widen our horizon, enlarge our field of interests, and live in the tonic atmosphere of people who are

succeeding and who transmit some of their enthusiasm and their joy in living to us. In turn we can pay them back in the same coin; thus by that vital interchange men help each other to help themselves.

Some of the disorders such as I have described, which are called functional, have their roots in very early childhood experiences, and, by the time the person reaches adulthood, present very complex problems that only the highly skilled specialists in this particular branch of medicine are competent to deal with. On the other hand, many of these disorders, at least in their obvious symptoms, are relatively superficially grounded and are not difficult to cure. When such bodily disorders arise in a person without any real physical basis, he should stop for a time, carefully examine in a straightforward way his inner being, and try to discover his real motives.

Let him ask himself, for example:

“What is the task I wish to avoid?”

“Who may there be in my immediate sur-

roundings for whom I entertain feelings of jealousy or hate?"

"Am I underrating my own possibilities of accomplishment, and being, as it were, more willing to fail than to make the necessary effort?"

Perhaps if he cannot do this for himself, at least he can seek intelligent advice and assistance. As a result he may often find himself easily relieved of symptoms which, if they were continued, might become seriously damaging to his possibilities of success.

One has to remember, too, in this connection, that functional maladies such as I have described may, if they persist over long periods of time, actually result in organic conditions. A long, persistent anxiety may so disturb the digestion that chronic increased acidity of the stomach is created which, if it continues indefinitely, may at least be a potent factor in producing an ulcer of the stomach. Other illustrations might be given, but the important thing to remember is that we are dealing here with a group of disorders

that are essentially curable, and that many of them might probably be materially bettered, if not entirely overcome, by an honest and straightforward examination of one's personal desires and motives.

It is this group of functional disorders that offers such a rich harvest to the charlatan, the quack, and the purveyor of patent medicines. Sometimes all that is needed at a critical moment in life is a little faith to enable one to go on, and this the charlatan or patent medicine may, for the time being at least, supply. Thus apparent miracles are produced in the way of cures which seem to the uninitiated to have been the result of the particular method employed. In this group of diseases almost any method will work sometimes with some people, but for the ultimate welfare of any one, it is of inestimable importance that he should not be deluded into pinning his faith upon some magic formula, but that he should make out of his experience an opportunity for getting better acquainted with himself and by so doing not only win back his health but be able to avoid, in the future, being at the

mercy of the same causes that may make him sick again. In other words, out of such an experience he should not acquire faith in some false god, but should learn to know himself better.

FEAR

Useless fear is paralyzing the energy of many men and women whose intelligence is beyond question.

BY

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CHAPTER X

FEAR

THE men who gain our spontaneous admiration are those of energy and courage. We yield homage even to the energetic and fearless villain. The hero must face the obstruction in his life, the things or men which threaten him or his purposes, boldly. When we see men whose intelligence is beyond question fail in their life-work, we ask what is paralyzing their energy. In many instances the answer to the question is *fear*.

Fear, however, does not necessarily paralyze energy and the capacity for achievement, for, though it has been grossly maligned, it is perhaps the most conservative and constructive force in life. Were it not for the fear of cold, men would not have built houses or utilized fire. Were it not for the fear of famine, men would have spared themselves the arduous tilling of the soil. The Ten Command-

ments are impotent instruments without the fear of public opinion.

Thrift, so dearly beloved by the bankers, has one of its roots in fear, and it is in reality the fear of death and disease which has built up religion and medicine. That the burned child dreads fire is another way of saying that fear of painful experiences teaches caution and care. It is a Pollyanna view of existence which would eliminate fear from life. If it is not, like love, the force which makes the world go around, it at least keeps the world from straying from its path.

The above concerns what may be called physiological fear, the fear which makes the hunted rabbit run like a streak, or lends cunning to the hunted fox. It is probable that the hero of our first paragraph felt fear, though he did not show it. It undoubtedly kept him planning and scheming when his followers were fast asleep; and when he would rather have rested, it spurred on his energy. Thus the man who achieves is a man who fears, but his fear wakes keener purpose, better plans, and more vigorous action.

There is another aspect of fear, however, an obsessive, paralyzing side, capable of disorganizing mind and body, leading to failure in the business of life. When fear becomes chronic, or when, so to speak, it becomes senseless, it destroys endurance as well as happiness and is the beginning and the height of disaster.

Emotions are not thin things, floating in air. Each emotion reverberates throughout the body and echoes in its remotest recesses. Each emotion alters the heart rate, the respiration, the secretion of the digestive juices, the flow of the blood through the vessels of the body, the tension of the muscles and their capacity for exertion; yes, it even alters the chemical reaction in the blood and in the tissues. Some emotions increase the energy output, as, for example, joy and certain phases of anger. Others, like sorrow, lessen or paralyze the energy of the body, decreasing the force and vigor of the heart beat, altering the intake of oxygen, lowering the muscular endurance, as well as interfering with the concentration and the power of thought.

The kind of fear I have in mind interferes with the business of life in a way that may be compared with a toxic dose of atropine. Atropine, a useful enough drug in small doses, dilates the pupils, changes the secretion of saliva, so that the mouth feels dry, makes the heart beat faster, increases the respiration, and, in excessive doses, alters the secretion of the stomach and the intestines.

Fear, in toxic doses, does similar things. The pupils of the eyes open wide because part of the nervous system is extraordinarily stimulated, the heart beats faster, the mouth dries up, the respiration becomes panting, the function of digestion may be completely disordered, so that even vomiting and diarrhea may take place.

In many ways atropine is less poisonous than fear, because once the drug is excreted from the body, as it surely will be within a short period of time, that ends the matter. But fear cannot be excreted like a drug. It tends to persist, intoxicating the mind and injuring the functions of the body. It can be recalled by every mental association which brings back

the original setting of the fear, so that under acute or chronic fear the sufferer is injured physically. Sleep, which rids us of the burden of consciousness and gives the body a chance to get rid of the waste products of activity and to build up energy to be expended next day, is lost. Appetite is lost. Be a man ever so hungry, something frightful may make it impossible for him to eat. Energy is lost as a result.

A person suffering from fear will complain sometimes of everything under the sun except the fear. Such a man recently consulted a physician about his insomnia. Sleep had become entirely impossible, he said, and he lay in bed all night twisting and turning, bathed in a cold sweat, his hands and feet numb. He did not divulge for some time any state of fear, but it was apparent that the type of insomnia was born of fear—the cold sweat, the numbness of the hands and feet, and the restlessness all indicated that.

When he was directly accused of withholding his real state of mind, he confessed, after some persuasion, that a fear had recently

entered his mind and taken possession of it, and that he could not expel the invader. He had learned a short time before that his father had died when he, the patient, was a very young child. The story of his father's sufferings profoundly impressed him, but what actually brought the alien and horrid mental state into his life was the casual, ignorant statement of a medical student that cancer was strongly hereditary.

Tired and worried because of other matters, the fear that he too would die of cancer became transformed into the fear that he might even then have cancer. He was afraid to go to a physician because it might turn out that his fear was not groundless. So he wrestled with a state of doubt and indecision until the sleep disturbance became a logical reason for medical consultation. It turned out that he did not have cancer, yet if it had come about that he had it, he probably would have borne up well under the blow. It is a fact that people take the news that they have an incurable condition much better than they bear up under the fear that they have one.

One of the most common types of fear, and perhaps the most ignoble one, is hypochondria. The hypochondriac is a classic figure, made especially immortal by Molière's "Le malade imaginaire." One can never forget the picture of that poor victim of his own fears, harassed by each fugitive pain or ache, dying of heart disease with each flutter of the heart, perishing of tuberculosis with each cough, looking at his tongue in the looking glass, constantly feeling his pulse, the prey of every charlatan and the victim of all the misguided advice given by his friends. The future of the hypochondriac is a stock butt of the humorists, and our pity for him is mixed with contempt.

It is a question whether or not hypochondriacs are born or made, but one thing is sure, that early childhood lays down the foundation of hypochondria for many people. Every doctor can testify to the fact that in some households every pain or ache of the child is magnified into a serious disease by the apprehension of the mother, who falls into a terror of fear with every minor, transient ailment of

her little ones. This is fatal to the child's poise. He is taught by an unconsciously absorbed example that his health is a precarious thing and that he has to be very careful about eating this or that or about getting his feet wet. It appears to him that a headache is a calamity and a little fatigue a perilous matter. As a result, he becomes introspective, watches himself closely, and thus brings into consciousness events in his body which are meant to be unconscious.

A man can easily, by paying attention to himself, discover that he is full of curious quivers, twinges, twists of pain, and little flutterings. These are easily magnified by apprehension into serious matters, when, as a matter of fact, they are part of the creakings and groanings of a hard-working machine. Just as there are some automobile drivers who are distracted by the slightest squeak in their car and are constantly worried lest it mean the injury of a vital part, and thus distract whoever rides with them as well, so there are people who view the machine of their lives with undue solicitude and with so sharp an

attention that normal things become pathological.

Every good movement has its evil results, just as every virtue develops its own defect of character. Thus, the thrifty tend to become parsimonious and ungenerous, and the chaste tend to become prudes and censorious critics of their fellows. Popular education in health has been a good thing on the whole, and there is no doubt that it has lessened the death rate from tuberculosis and brought about greatly improved habits of living. Its bad side is the hypochondria which it may produce.

The early signs of disease have become emphasized, with the familiar result of a little knowledge becoming a dangerous thing. Every loss of weight does not mean tuberculosis, and every pain in the stomach does not mean ulcer. The attention to diet which has rightly been directed against obesity has made the people of the community more sightly in that there are fewer fat men and women than afflicted the eye a generation ago. But a bad result, the lessened pleasure in food, has also flowed from all this attention to diet.

When a man (perhaps more often a woman) asks himself with every mouthful whether or not he is eating too much, and whether the calories are right, and if he is getting enough vitamins, he is bringing into consciousness the operation of a part of the body meant to be unconscious. Digestion is best performed when one does not fear indigestion. The juices of the body are better secreted if one does not think about them. Fear of disease is thus an evil result of the good campaign for popular education.

I remember a man who had at one time some disturbance of digestion. This was temporary and probably due to some foolish extremes of eating and drinking, but he took the warnings of his physicians as to diet with deadly literalness. Thereafter he watched his meals with an eagle eye, refused this bit of fried food, and that particular sauce; weighed in his mind the amount of meat he was to eat each day, was tremendously solicitous as to how it must be prepared, and measured out the coffee he drank with a knowledge of how many grains of caffeine it contained. The re-

sult was that instead of eating three times a day and forgetting about eating the rest of the time, he became thoroughly obsessed by food and fears of indigestion and thus developed a complete indigestion. Every doctor has listened to the details of the complaints of such patients, and every one knows the man who fills himself up with bicarbonate of soda after each meal, who drinks this and that kind of water, and exercises in peculiar ways so as to facilitate his natural functions.

The advice given this man was simple. He was told that as he suffered pains and disturbances of all kinds although dieting, to stop dieting and eat what he pleased; he would suffer, but at any rate he would have the pleasure of eating what he liked. All medicines were taken from him. In a short time his pains lessened, and as the ignoble attention he gave his stomach disappeared, so did the symptoms which arose from that organ.

I do not at all decry the scientific attention paid to high blood pressure in these days. High blood pressure is an evil of our civilization, and perhaps a natural evil to which

the human being is subject. It seems to me, however, to be a little better and somewhat more noble to die of blood pressure than to die of fear. I doubt that those who become too zealously devoted to a diet and eat with fear and trembling live any longer than those who, having learned that they have high blood pressure, live in a general way sanely without giving too much attention to the particulars of existence. One thing is sure, even if a hypochondriac lives long: to live long as a hypochondriac is a doubtful blessing.

Most health faddists are hypochondriacs—victims of fear. The man who chews his food a hundred times before he swallows it is a victim of fear. The vegetarians in a non-vegetarian country may possibly live longer than their carnivorous friends, but almost invariably they are continually worried about their diet, and usually their vegetarianism lasts a short time, for they discover that it has not cured their ills, largely because those ills are born of fear. The walk-in-the-grass-with-bare-feet cults, the return-to-nature victims, the fresh-air dupes, all show their fear in

their belief that this or that measure is a panacea for the ills of mankind. The history of the hypochondriac is a sad one, but very profitable to the physicians, the charlatans, the cults of healing, the patent medicine distributors, and the health resorts.

Fear often comes from fatigue. Let any one imagine himself in a closed-in room, eating ill-tasting food, lying at night on a couch which prevents sleep, and then see whether he can picture himself in the morning arising with fresh, vigorous attitudes toward his purposes, with the will to beat down obstacles or alertly scheming a clever campaign. Our civilization is a fatiguing one. It is too tense, too full of noise, replete with hurry and bustle; we turn night into day and stimulate ourselves constantly when we should rest. We are in a tetanus of work, and just as evil a tetanus of pleasure-seeking.

When one considers the bombardment to which each one of us is subjected in a large city, at the mercy of our scientific instruments, of telephones, automobiles, and radios which never give us periods of relaxation and quiet;

when one considers the intense competition in desire, so that we are continually seeking satisfaction for artificially built up appetites, the wonder is not that some of us become neurasthenic and prone to fear, but that all of us do not break down under the burden. The commonest complaint in our society is "I am so tired," a complaint not so much born of physical fatigue as it is of mental exhaustion. On such a basis fear arises readily—one of the worst of fears—the loss of self-confidence, the fear of failure, the fear of frustration of the life-plans.

Periodically one sees very energetic, highly engined men and women, full of pep and confidence, disappear from activity for a while. The statement is given out that they have a nervous breakdown or something of that kind. What has happened to them is that the exhaustion to which they finally succumb fills them full of fear and depression, plunges them into abysses of apprehension, which is worse than any physical disease. When fatigue becomes too great, when periods of recuperation are not indulged in, one of the first signs

is a loss of confidence in the affairs of life. A man commences to view his business affairs with too much apprehension. He takes them about with him and cannot shake them off. They obtrude when he should be free of them—that is, in the theater or when love should have his undivided attention. When worries become obsessive, the first question to ask yourself is, "Am I not on the verge of exhaustion?" A fresh, vigorous mind can throw off the disagreeable; a jaded mind becomes its prey.

Fatigue of this kind very often comes from emotional situations of a type which divide up the self, so that there is an inner struggle between one part of the personality and another, a calamitous sort of civil war. In other words, any conflict of a futile type may show itself by curious fears. A certain young woman of my acquaintance developed fear of going out of doors. Whenever she ventured out beyond a certain distance from her home, her heart palpitated, she had a feeling as if she were going to faint, and in a panic she would run home, the only place where she felt safe.

There was nothing wrong with her physically—no basis in any of the great organs of the body for the feeling of dizziness and impending fall which afflicted her away from the haven of her home.

An analysis of her life revealed that her mother, a tyrannical invalid, was determined to keep her for herself. The mother had the ideas and ideals of her girlhood of 1880 and insisted that her daughter also live in that period.

But the girl was born in 1900, in an age when there was freedom for women, and felt the yearnings for life and love normal to her years; but also she felt herself bound in duty to her mother. Each day was spent in rebellion against her mother and against herself, in hatred and love for her mother and hatred and love for herself. This girl's symptoms of fear and panic were due to the exhaustion excited by conflict within her own breast, and which caused her to respond excessively to the sights, sounds, and bombarding stimuli of the bustling outer world. When she was removed from the home, when she replanned her life

so as to free herself from the conflict by a courageous declaration of independence, her symptoms vanished.

One could go on indefinitely discussing the causes of fear and its disorganizing effect upon the personality and the disastrous results to the purposes, plans, and achievements of men and women. The anthropologists have filled fat books about the fear underlying taboo, racial customs, and queer beliefs. Superstitions are folk-fears. Every doctor is continually coming in contact not only with disease but the fear of disease. Every man in charge of the morale of soldiers knows that what he has to combat is not only the fear of death and injury but the illnesses which arise from that fear, and the illnesses which come from the fear of showing fear.

The whole question of sex must some day be thrown open for discussion, because the ignorance which prevails in respect to it breeds the most curious fears. Sex life, with its repressions, its inhibitions, and its capacity for creating inner disunion and ego demoralization, often creates fear which manifests it-

self indirectly, so that the fear is disguised in one form or another. For some schools of psychology the disguises are unconsciously assumed and need analysis to bring them to light. While this is not my belief, it is true that those inner struggles which originate from the sexual dilemmas of civilization cause many of the wrecked lives of our times.

Some day a new Moses will arise and lay down commandments which, if followed, will do away with useless fear. A humbler mind, uninspired and with due knowledge of the difficulties of dealing with the human being, may venture some advice. The aim of this advice can be labeled the "prophylaxis of fear," because cure, in all of humanity's ills, is more costly and difficult than prevention. Thus:

Avoid chronic fatigue, especially that type of fatigue which arises in a disunion of the personality. Settle your conflicts some way or other, get some one to help you settle them. Reach a positive attitude toward your difficulties. If you reach a right attitude, so much the better. A wrong positive attitude is better than doubt, indecision, and fear.

Take care of your physical health, but remember that physical health is largely an unconscious matter, and that the great functions of the body operate best when over-anxious attention is not given to them. And remember, science has quite often changed its mind on such matters as diet.

Do you seek pleasure too assiduously and too constantly? Because an exhaustion of the pleasure capacity thus arises. Go to a retreat once in a while. Periodically shut yourself away from civilization.

Avoid finickiness. Avoid finickiness. Avoid finickiness.

Be ambitious, but not too ambitious. You can overextend your plans and reach failure just as the business man can overextend his business and crash into bankruptcy. Caution is not heroic, but very comfortable and safe.

Harden your mind against the little slights to which it will surely be subjected. This is difficult to do after maturity is reached, and so is best done in childhood. A child trained in sensitiveness is a child trained to fear, and his liability to failure is increased. This is not

a nice world for the oversensitive. A tough ego may still retain sympathy and understanding and yet be hardened against feeling too much.

WHY WOMEN FAIL

Sex consciousness, stop-gap jobs, and overtime home tasks make women fail in business. Real success comes when they have learned to sublimate—find creative satisfaction in their work.

BY

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CHAPTER XI

WHY WOMEN FAIL

IT will always be harder for a woman to succeed in business than a man, because nature has loaded her with handicaps from the start.

Contrary to popular belief, her handicaps are not physical. If they were she might have reason for despair, for nothing that lies within her power to do will change the physical characteristics of her sex.

The greatest difficulties which a woman has to overcome in the business world are psychological. In this fact lies her hope and her opportunity—for explorations in the hitherto almost uncharted sea of the mind are proving to us that the pattern of a character may often be changed, though the pattern of a body—except for the work of time and the beauty doctors—must usually remain essentially the same.

[That the physical limitations of her sex

are not the important limitations is visibly proven, no matter in what direction you choose to look. Among many primitive people the woman was, and still is, the field laborer, burden bearer and general man-of-all-work. Any one who has watched the immigrant families landing at Ellis Island has seen the fathers striding ahead, free and unencumbered, while their wives follow, leading the children and carrying on their broad backs all the family possessions. Even when the Old World family learns that this arrangement is not *de rigueur* in the new country the heavy physical labor often continues to fall, though not quite so obviously, on the feminine half of the combination.

No; if more women fail in business than men—or rather if fewer succeed—it is not because of greater physical handicaps but because business is, generally speaking, a man-controlled affair; because many women approach it in the wrong state of mind, and because it is, for the majority of them, only a substitute activity for the great job for which nature molded them.

In all their relationships women are apt to be more personal and more emotional than men. This characteristic is useful and often endearing outside the office, but in the business machine, geared so that every foot of space and every hour of time should earn its regular share of the dividends, too much emotion shatters efficiency, confuses issues, muddles clear thinking, and produces distrust and fear.

Of course, the very fact that a woman is usually of the opposite sex from her boss—a situation which does not confront the average male employee—makes getting along more difficult than it otherwise would be, but this difficulty need not be exaggerated. A woman who is eternally sex conscious in all her business relationships helps the men with whom she is associated to fail as well as herself.

In a talk to her feminine students, Madame Curie once said that the two principal requisites to success—granted ability—were belief in the worth-whileness of what you were doing, and concentration. Sex consciousness is an enemy of concentration. Business demands

that a woman should not be sex conscious in business hours. This means more than that she must not try to "vamp" all her male associates, or indulge in romantic day-dreaming when she is being paid to add up figures. Men themselves are not free from these faults. Women who wish to succeed should come to the office wearing office clothes, not flaunting their sex in sleeveless dresses more suggestive of the ballroom or the beach. They should reserve jewelry and heavy perfumes, those secondary sex appeals, for parties.

It is significant that when men themselves gave up the do-nothing life of courtiers and went in for earning their living instead of wringing it from a starving peasantry, they discarded silks and satins, lace and perfumed furbelows. Many a man to-day thinks he looks more alluring in a Tuxedo than a sack suit, but he doesn't, for that reason, wear his Tuxedo to the office.

The girl who buys her office clothes principally for their sex appeal may get by and hold her job, but she won't progress far in it, and her success will not be permanent. Look

around at the most successful women you know. You will find them, in clothes and everything else, feminine but not aggressively female.

Some women try to counteract sex prejudice by an exaggerated masculinity. This is like trying to drown the taste of sugar by putting in lots of salt. It is merely another form of sex consciousness and is peculiarly irritating to the average man.

Another way in which her personal approach to problems injures the woman in business is that it frequently makes her unduly "touchy." Many men hate to administer to women employees reproof and criticism which would be of the utmost value to them, for fear of precipitating tears. Of course, it is equally true that a man dislikes above all things being called down by a woman superior, but as many more women than men are in subordinate positions, this tendency to take a business criticism as a personal affront is more often harmful to women than to men.

Nor should a woman, except during the child-bearing and nursing period, expect and

demand special favors just because she is a woman. To do so is simply adding to her handicap. The granting of a favor has a dangerous psychological back kick; it creates a sense of superiority in the favorer and an unconscious feeling of inferiority in the favoree. Let women stand on their own feet; they may be double A and French heeled at that, but they are a firmer foundation for business success than the crutch of chivalry.

But standing on her own feet is not the whole duty of a business woman. If she happens to be an executive and wants to remain one, she should apply the same teaching to those under her. Many women have a normal and unquenchable desire to mother everything weak—big or little, male or female—that comes within the radius of their influence. This is a beautiful quality and the world needs it, but it isn't business.

Look at almost any woman executive you know; somewhere in her employ, clogging the business machinery and putting an extra burden on the woman herself, you will find her harboring a weakling who ought to be

scrapped—or at least transformed to a job closer to his capabilities. Men are more ruthless in all their business relations; women are held back by their greater loyalty and their frequent unwillingness to build success on some one else's failure.

This same protective instinct holds back married women in business, because if they happen to be in love with their husbands they do not want to overshadow them. The theme of a recent popular motion picture was the horrible selfishness of a capable woman lawyer who insisted on following up her first success, instead of giving up the work she loved in order to play around with a likable but weak husband. The audience obviously agreed with the scenario writer that she was a brute, and the "happy ending" did not come until the husband, by indulging in a little extra-marital affair, had brought her to her senses. The business woman who prefers happiness in the home to success in the office knows that very few men enjoy the title "Husband of ——" placed before their names. Even Menelaus, though he may have been

proud of it at first, found it of dubious value in the end.

The problem of a married woman in business is one of the most serious of our generation. Economic conditions being as they are, it is futile to tell women to go home and let the nearest male relative support them; such a course would raise overnight the greatest army of embattled males the world has ever seen. Aside from woman's inherent right to work if she wants to, thousands of families could not face the grocer without the help of the wife's pay envelope.

This means, though, that every married woman in business is holding down two jobs, or at least a job and a half. For marriage brings duties and responsibilities to a woman that even the most skilful servants cannot take from her shoulders. One hundred per cent. concentration is impossible if, in the middle of planning an advertising campaign, her mind calls up the specter of Johnny running in front of an automobile.

All of these handicaps which the business woman faces are, however, subordinate to the

great handicap from which most of them spring—the fact that business is, for most women, merely a substitute activity for child-bearing.

All of us possess a greater or less amount of creative energy, men as well as women. If this energy is used to reproduce a living human being, we say that it “functions at the biological level.” That is, it expresses itself in a physical result.

Business does not, in the main, interfere with man’s natural expression of his creative energy. On the contrary, the urge to produce and protect a family is the great force that turns the wheels of power houses, flings bridges across obstructing waters and sends great engines and ocean liners flying across the earth’s land and water surface.

But this is not true of the woman in business. She handles her creative energy in one of three ways: Stifles it in some form of *substitute activity* which brings her no real satisfaction, simply because it is only a substitute; or marries and is thus put under the nervous and physical strain of a double rôle,

that of both home-maker and home-supporter; or succeeds in what psychologists call *sublimating*—that is, using her energies to create constructive ideas.

If this is true, then why isn't sublimation a substitute activity, and why is it more successful?

Because a substitute activity is just what it has been called—merely a substitute, with no thought given to its suitability, its constructive value, or the sense of accomplishment which one should derive from it. When, on the other hand, a woman has succeeded in sublimating, she has found some kind of work which really *replaces* the work of child-bearing. She is satisfied because she is creating, not children, but something less tangible but no less real. Psychiatrists describe this by saying that her creative energy is functioning at the psychological level.

For work to be a real sublimation it must give a woman a sense of satisfaction, a feeling of accomplishment, the joy of creation. Selling ribbon behind the counter is not likely

to give this feeling, but buying for that department, building up the best ribbon counter in town, may do so. Pounding a typewriter all day probably won't, but being secretary to an able man and taking part in his constructive work probably will. Running a business of your own, from a hemstitching shop to a chain of restaurants, may be a sublimation. Social work, teaching, nursing—all these may carry creative satisfaction.

Most people have the feeling that the greatest creative joy may be derived from one of the arts—writing, painting, composing, dancing, acting. Hence our flood of mediocre poets, painters, actors, musicians—preferring starvation in overcrowded professions to prosperity as part of the business machine. Hence the present violent enthusiasm for weaving and batik and toymaking, which give so many women a chance for creative work with their hands.

It is a mistake to imagine, though, that for work to be a sublimation it must be impressive enough to give its creator a place in

"Who's Who." Not its importance to the world but its importance to the individual is what matters. If a woman can

Make a cherry pie

Quick as a cat can wink her eye,

and if, when finished, it is a cherry pie that she is proud of, the making of it may be for her a sublimation. Into many an old-fashioned quilt, with its quaintly named design, has flowed a stream of creative energy which nature intended for another purpose.

[The idea that women take up work merely as a substitute activity until they marry has been back of the unwillingness, in many cases, of men employers to promote women to higher positions. Many men have the idea that young women are just marking time. This is true of a great number, and those of whom it isn't true suffer from the generalization. In one great concern employing more than fifteen hundred women the manager made the statement that he did not promote women employees as readily as men because women were considered only temporaries.

Many of the women who had been with this firm a long time became depressed and gave up business because they felt they were being discriminated against and had no chance of getting ahead, even though they worked just as hard as the men and did just as efficient work.

No one will deny that in the present man-controlled world of business this is frequently true, principally in the stop-gap group of occupations; women do not really get a square deal. But women will never overcome discrimination if they invite it by expecting it and surrender at its first appearance. Too many women suffer from inferiority complexes. Nothing is quite so stifling to ambition and initiative as the beforehand conviction that you are not going to get anywhere. One way to get a square deal is to take it for granted that you will.

This points to another accusation which men employers level against women. They say they are not as ambitious as the men, that the desire to get ahead is not a dominating motive, that they are more easily satisfied with

small jobs, less likely to look ahead to bigger ones. This is undoubtedly because few women who enter business vision themselves as staying in it indefinitely, whereas most men know they *must* stay in it.

The woman who does succeed in a big way usually has behind her the necessity of taking care of parents, husband, or children. She is made ambitious by that greatest of all feminine urges—the maternal instinct.

In the middle years nature strikes a cruel blow at the business woman who has not learned to sublimate. Though the change that comes at this time is, to begin with, physical, it is not the bodily effects but the mental and emotional by-products which muddy the stream of her business life. A pattern of thinking inherited from primitive ages makes her feel that her value in the world is greatly lessened because she can no longer bear children. If she is unmarried she looks at the women who have children and feels cheated. The fact that she has not been able to fulfil her biological destiny is, indeed, one of the

greatest psychological factors in the unrest and failure of business women. School teachers probably offer the best example, for everywhere in the past and still in many localities they have been required to be single. School contracts have even carried a clause whereby the *woman* teacher has been forced to pledge herself not to marry, though no such vow has been exacted from men teachers. This condition, however, is changing, so that teaching need no longer be known as "pedagogical celibacy."

But loss of the ability to bear children is not the only aspect of the change that comes at this time which is emotionally upsetting to woman. Frequently she is even more distressed by the loss of physical charm which may accompany it. Partly on those moments of painful contemplation when the middle-aged woman stands before her mirror, men have built one of the greatest industries in America. If it were not for her agonized visionings, countless bright young advertising lads would be out of jobs and the nation

would not have spent, last year, for cosmetics and other beauty aids, over one hundred and forty-one million dollars.

The change which woman so dreads is a mere incident to man and comes much later, not at the height of his business career. It does not bring with it the same train of mental and emotional complications which throw the machinery out of gear for so many business women whose success depends on clear and constructive thinking.

Yet for those women who realize the cause of their disorganized mental state and can grapple with it, the last third of life may be the cleared road to achievement. Increasing years bring many compensations to make up for the disabilities. The first step is acceptance of the disabilities, for they are inevitable. The second is a determination to concentrate on the compensations and make constructive use of them. Some of the compensations when sex has ceased from troubling are a more philosophic point of view, a mellowed judgment, a broader outlook. Many women

do their best work in the world after forty-five.

The final psychological reason why women fail in business is that they are often overconscientious. A woman who is really interested in her job makes a fetish of it. Every summer sees the work of countless offices being carried on by hard-working feminine assistants and secretaries, while the boss disports himself on golf links and beach.

It is true that most women, being in subordinate positions, cannot exercise this freedom for play, but it is noteworthy that even those in a position to enjoy leisure do not as a rule take advantage of it. Not even the most poorly paid shipping clerk would dream of trying to make his own shirts, and confidential investigation would probably reveal that mighty few darn their own socks. Yet the cities are full of women on much larger salaries who not only make their own clothes, but cook their own meals and do their own laundry. Woman has undertaken to compete with man in his own field, but in doing so has insisted on handi-



capping herself with many duties of her former profession.

To all these causes of failure which are peculiarly feminine may be added most of the psychological factors which hold back men from success and which have been discussed in other chapters in this book. But let the women who, because of this preponderance of handicaps, feel that nature has played unfairly with them, remember that in their own field no man on earth can successfully compete with them!

JOB MISFITS

The wrong job frequently blocks the road to success. Many a high-priced executive would be a failure if he had to change places with his secretary.

BY

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CHAPTER XII

JOB MISFITS

ABOUT 20 per cent. of the employees of mercantile establishments—and this is probably true of other organizations as well—are “problem” individuals. That is, they are either out-and-out liabilities or potential liabilities to the business man. It is people from this group who are being repeatedly transferred from job to job—or being fired, or resigning. They are the work failures that in the majority of cases are a drag on any organization.

As the employer sees these individuals, they are production problems—chronic health problems, chronic attendance problems, serious attitude problems, or marked disciplinary cases and the like; from his viewpoint, he is better off without them.

As the psychiatrist sees them, they all present distinguishing physical and mental characteristics that underlie not only their job

maladjustments, but faulty adjustive efforts and failures in other life situations.

In studying the life histories of such persons and analyzing their careers, the psychiatrist is struck with one outstanding factor which is true of most of them—a personality make-up that is either unsuited to the job itself, to the particular department, to the standards of the organization, or to successful work in general under any business conditions, no matter how efficient. Though such cases may at first seem hopeless, and the business man's answer is often just to weed them out, the experience of the psychiatrist has led him to believe that a large proportion of these people—fully 50 per cent.—may be adjusted and changed into assets rather than liabilities. It has been demonstrated through concrete cases that the results achieved in the adjustment of employees, and in the increase of their efficiency, in their improved morale, and in the prevention of chronic work difficulties that frequently lead to serious social failure, more than justify such a procedure.

It is hard to see how business and industry

are going to escape the definite social obligation involved in their increasing contributions to that large army of misfits who are bandied about the community from one store to another, or from one industry to another; out of work a large proportion of the time; partly supported by family, or friends, or churches, or social agencies, or institutions; furnishing the richest possible soil for the development and growth of delinquency and mental disease—conditions that become the joint burden and responsibility of the community as a whole.

Business responsibility, if there is to be such, certainly does not lie in the direction of creating facilities for the custodial care of human failures or the cure of apparently hopeless work maladjustments, but rather in the early recognition, careful diagnosis, and conscious responsibility for preventing factors that later lead to such unfortunate results.

The conditions that lead to work failure are frequently recognizable through proper individual methods of study early in the employee's work career and at a time when suitable adjustive efforts give promise of results.

By this I mean results not only in terms of human salvage but results in terms of increased production and in terms of dollars and cents.

The reasons for job failure are many and varied. Probably 15 per cent. of such failures are due to serious physical conditions calling for medical treatment. The remaining 85 per cent. are to be thought of either in terms of the lack of specialized job ability to perform the task, or—what is more common and in a way more hopeful (as being modifiable)—the interference of personality difficulties of a well-marked or temporary nature.

Mary G. was an example of a failure turned into a success because, with help, she did achieve the right attitude. She needed her job badly. She had left home, after the second marriage of her father, because of her inability to get along with her stepmother. Though eighteen years of age, she had never worked before, and though intelligent and fairly capable, she had not acquired efficient habits of application—either in school or at home. She was very immature and childish,

easily depressed, very emotional, and inclined to day-dream. She had lost twenty-five pounds in weight during the past three months. She was not sleeping well at night; was very lonely, and at her work showed a tendency to mental reverie, periods of detachment, ineffectiveness in dealing with customers, lack of knowledge of stock, marked fatiguability, and irritation when criticized. Her sales were poor. She was a new girl, and her buyer saw no reason for keeping her; so she made out a lay-off slip and sent it through to the general manager's office. Here, instead of being fired, she won a reprieve. The general manager requested that she be given a psychiatric examination. Mary was passing through an acute period of depression that needed psychiatric understanding and treatment.

The results of the whole study indicated a most favorable outlook for adjustment of her personality disorder and ultimate development into a producing employee. Her insomnia cleared up within the first week of treatment. She regained her appetite, began to increase in weight, and to improve in her work

adjustments. With a growing insight into the origin of her mental difficulties, and with an increasing understanding of the mechanisms involved, she began to make positive efforts in the direction of satisfactory achievements in her job, with the result that within two weeks her buyer sent in a request that she be not laid off, with the statement, "I would like to keep her, as she is so cheerful and helpful to every one, and once she learns a thing she does not forget it." At the end of three months her buyer reports, "She is quite satisfactory. Her sales are good, but I lay special emphasis on her willingness, her good nature, and her service to customers."

By far the most outstanding thing in the whole situation, as one studies resignations, lay-offs, and problem workers in general, is the fact that people fail in life and at work not because of poor intelligence or the lack of sufficient ability to perform a given task successfully, but because of their failure or inability to use properly such aptitudes and abilities as they actually possess. Though in a visionary sort of a way, ambitious to be some-

thing else than that which they really are, and insisting that they wish to amount to something some day, many people have not that urge and definiteness of work purpose to do well the thing at hand, the task facing them. The lack of an adequate drive in their personality make-up, or of a misdirected drive, the presence of unhealthy mental preoccupations, faulty habits and attitudes, inferiority feelings, anxiety states, fears and hatreds, unsatisfied longings, irrational thinking, pessimistic moods, violent prejudices, obsessing reveries, emotional dissatisfactions, and the like, commonly dominate the background of the personality make-up of failures we have seen, and commonly interfere with the use of such abilities as these individuals ordinarily possess.

Of course, we are here dealing with mental processes that play a part in the faulty adjustments of the average normal person that often go undetected and receive little or no special care and consideration, though it is to these conditions in supposedly normal people that may be attributed a large proportion of domestic difficulties and social complications.

These residuals of failure in all of us are more often at the root of society's difficulties than is commonly thought, and herein lies a challenge to the reformer who would improve all human relations through law enforcement and legislative means.

It all comes back to the sort of individual training that implies due consideration in childhood to other mental factors than intelligence and its development—an educational program that involves well-rounded training of the entire mental life, and gives due emphasis to the emotions, to the habits, to the character make-up, and to the healthy integration of the total personality.

To one who has studied large numbers of young workers on the job, who has witnessed their failure to meet the job requirements and the department standards, and who has devoted much time to working out therapeutic and adjustment facilities in individual cases, it is hard to understand the neglect on the part of the individual worker himself to recognize the situation as it really is and frankly admit his own personal responsibility for failure—to

seek within his own personality not only an explanation of his failure but a responsible basis for future success and to intelligently work out his salvation through an honest effort at reconstructing his own nature, reforming his own personality rather than changing his department or his organization, or society at large. This right attitude toward job failure on the part of the individual himself is essential for really good adjustive efforts at work. And yet this is a condition frequently lacking in a large number of individuals who change jobs frequently, who are dissatisfied with the work that they have, who are disturbed at not getting ahead, and who wish to find just exactly the right sort of job and job environment which they believe themselves not only suited for but entitled to.

Fannie L. is twenty-eight years old, and she is a college graduate. Her background is one of culture, beyond the average amount of travel, a home life that has engendered much confidence in herself, and the general developmental environment that should have given her superior advantage over most young women

of her age. She was placed in a department almost entirely composed of college women, where the sort of work done appealed normally to women of her type and education. Here she did not make effective contacts with her associates. She proved careless and negligent in handling relatively important details in her work. She was frequently insubordinate—giving out information against the rules of the department and the definite decisions of her superior; was never satisfied with her work—seemed restive and anxious for something more important, and later secured promotion to a rather important position in another department. In this department she was entirely unable to secure the support of the sales clerks under her. She was domineering at times and truculent at other times. She did not study her stock and consequently was not thoroughly familiar with the merchandise. She had vague ideas relating to things that should be done, but was not familiar with what her superior wished accomplished. She was inaccurate and not systematic in her own work. In short, a young woman of considerable

ability and educational background, a good general appearance, and a reasonable amount of industry, is clearly a misfit, due to defects in her own personality that she herself refuses to recognize. She is an individualist and will never do team work well. She is not effective with others and has not acquired those qualities that are essential for success as an executive.

When one studies carefully a job situation itself and examines the workers that succeed and those that fail in performing the job satisfactorily, one develops certain criteria that may be known as job specifications and personal qualifications. These criteria are used as a guide for the employment interviewer against which she checks each applicant for the job.

Our own studies of successful sales-clerks indicate that the best sales-people in a department store are found to be between twenty-five and forty-five years of age; that they have received little more than grammar school or two years high school education, are in good physical condition, are free from phys-

ical defects and disorders, and are of average or dull average intelligence, having intelligence quotients between 80 and 109. (Those below this level and those above tend to furnish more problems.) Their personality make-up is that of fairly well-adjusted, well-integrated individuals, free from any serious disturbances in their mental life, alert, reasonably and agreeably aggressive, courteous, responsive, and interested in people. They make good contacts with others, are convincing, have a well-defined interest in merchandise and in services to customers, show a good attitude toward their job, are free from marked tendency to introspection and mentally gossiping with themselves, or, in other words, have not an introverted or shut-in personality.

The average good sales-clerk is inclined to be an extravert, an individual whose life adjustments are easily made on an external rather than an internal basis. As we have said before, a good sales-clerk is relatively free from serious disorders of his personality. He has good insight into his own personal problems and has developed satisfactory and effective ways

of dealing with them. He is more inclined to be free from disturbing home problems in the way of friction and issues that make for great anxiety and discouragement.

We have also studied a large number of so-called "worst sales-clerks," and we find the elements that underlie failure are primarily those which affect the personality, the attitude, the interest, and the effective application and use of such abilities as the person has. The introverted, shut-in, day-dreaming individual, who waits for the customer rather than sensing his needs and interests; the neurotic, self-centered employee, oversolicitous of his own bodily ills, whose mind is mainly concentrated on himself and his personal problems; the disgruntled, dissatisfied, supercilious, cynical employee whose attitude toward people and life in general is distorted, abnormal, and unhealthy, certainly make poor contacts with customers, are anything but convincing, do not invite confidence, and universally run what is called "poor books." Of course, such individuals are poor personnel risks in any sort of job, and are found to be unprofitable,

disturbing, and a liability in non-sales as well as sales positions. We have known of lay-offs of individuals of this type who were good producers in office and such like positions, but whose general attitude influenced seriously the morale of the entire group.

The greatest drawback to successful treatment of this sort of maladjusted worker has universally been his own attitude, what may be called his "poor insight." He does not see himself as he really is, and he has not accustomed himself to dealing directly, squarely, and frankly with reality, whatever it may be. It is more in keeping with his past ways of behaving, and it is easier to get out of tight situations by running away from difficulties, by developing illnesses, or some other means of escape; or by compensating for his own failure through convincing himself that the fault really was not his own but due to others.

Many individuals are frankly in the wrong job; they are working at a task for which they are not particularly well qualified and from which they obtain little satisfaction or sense of achievement. Those qualities that make for

success at cashiering, that involve motor speed, motor dexterity, a high degree of accuracy in handling figures and money, interest in things rather than people, ability to maintain a high degree of psychological tension and concentrate effectively on a job involving a limited area and composed of few routine elements, might very well involve failure in a job such as merchandising or selling goods. And the reverse is true; the qualities for successful salesmanship may make for a misfit at cashiering.

Those same qualities—degree of intelligence, mental alertness, interest in figures, type of personality make-up, etc.—that make for success in clerical work, if used as a guide in selecting markers (marking is a simple, monotonous task, involving the marking of goods) would undoubtedly produce a large turnover among employees. For straight, simple marking, intelligence quotients between 60 and 80 and educational achievements of less than grammar-school graduation suffice, and may even be considered desirable; while for office clerical work an intelligence quotient between 90 and 109 and high school education

are essential. Different jobs will involve different physical and mental qualifications, and individuals who fail in one may do well in others for which they are better suited.

Ellen T., age twenty, was a cashier. She was falling down in her work, due to the frequency and seriousness of errors made in the handling of money. Her department superintendent stated that he proposed to lay her off if something could not be done to prevent the shorts she was having in her cash. Our study of her case showed a young woman in splendid physical condition, rather tall and with a good personal appearance, neatly dressed and with a pleasing personality. She was of average normal intelligence, was alert, aggressive, courteous, and had a well-defined interest in people. In her psychological tests she showed very poor motor dexterity. She also was rated very poor in accuracy tests; likewise she secured a poor rating in her speed tests. These three essentials disqualified her for cashiering, which involved a rapid and accurate handling of an enormous number of carriers containing cash transactions throughout the day. She found it

very difficult to hold her attention on her work, which was "monotonous and uninteresting"; figures and money had little hold on her, and she found herself constantly listening to the conversation of other cashiers who were not busy. She also, during her idle moments, tended to fall back into an old habit of mental reveries, and when awakened by the startling presence of a carrier to be handled she was not always prepared for the occasion. It is impossible to give in this short discussion anything like a true picture of the factors brought out in this case that indicated poor cashiering material. Nevertheless, she had qualities that impressed us with her value for sales. We recommended her transfer and she made a success as a sales-clerk. To-day, about one year after our study, she is a junior executive.

Fay N., nineteen years old, was employed as a marker. At this work she proved unco-operative and did not do her part toward getting her work accomplished. She showed a lack of interest in what she was doing, though it was obvious that she knew her work well.

Her production was very poor and at times she was insubordinate. The head of her department decided she was of no value and planned to lay her off. Before putting through a recommendation for lay-off, he had her case carefully studied, with the following results:

She was found to be in good physical condition and free from any outstanding physical defects or disorders. Her intelligence quotient was 103, which gave her a rating of average normal intelligence. In her speed tests she secured a rating of good; in accuracy test she was rated good; in learning ability she was rated good; in motor dexterity she was rated fair to good. She had a pleasing appearance, was neat and fairly well dressed, alert, active, responsive, and lively. She gave no evidence of any mental retardation or mental handicaps. No particular difficulties in her personality make-up were discovered that would handicap her production and her success at work, other than the fact that she was dissatisfied with the work that she was doing. The monotony of it bored her. There was not enough in it to offer variety and to appeal to

interest. She was single and lived at home with her family. There were no domestic or financial difficulties. She had two and a half years of high school and had had some previous experience in selling.

Our conclusions in this case were that we had a job misfit—an employee who was well equipped to do office clerical work and who should succeed in such a position. We recommended her transfer to a clerical job. This was put through, and now, several months since her transfer, she is most satisfactory to her department head and is rated as one of the best clerical workers in the department. There is no longer a problem in her case.

Each job, as we have previously mentioned, has its particular personnel qualifications in terms of age, schooling, work experience, training, physical condition, intelligence rating, special job ability as indicated by psychological tests, and type of personality make-up as indicated by psychiatric examination. Mary J. was the case of a young woman who had all the qualities of a good head of stock, according to her store experience and the judg-

ment of her superiors. Her personality make-up seemed to be ideal. She was energetic, industrious, aggressive, alert, well adjusted, made splendid contacts with the sales force, had a good attitude and great interest in her work; but she fell short in her intelligence rating. She had an intelligence quotient of only 76, which gave her a classification of subnormal. This seemed well compensated for by an unusually responsive and reliable personality make-up. She was promoted, but fell down on the job, due to her inability to grasp the complexity of details and to handle efficiently things out of the ordinary routine. She was placed in a supervisory capacity of less complexity, where the work was routine, and made a success.

The creation of facilities in large business and industrial organizations for the study of problem employees, for the investigation of vocational aptitudes, and for the guidance and proper placement of individual workers is the next step in constructive personnel work. Such individual studies are essential to sound case work, and will become the very heart of fu-

ture personnel activities. Much of so-called job failure now so prevalent will be prevented with the institution of suitable scientific measures of this nature.

The utilization of the principles of careful and scientific selection among applicants according to the needs of the job itself, and proper placement of new employees in that line of work for which they are best suited, is a fundamental requirement for intelligent employment procedure in any organization. These so-called human factors in production, when adequately considered in the light of modern conceptions of human behavior, and when applied in employment, training, placement, and management, will not only pay in the prevention of the "job misfit" but in measurable terms of dollars and cents.

Workers themselves should bear in mind that the greatest qualification for success in any given job, and the safest possible insurance against lay-off and work failure, is not so much some mystical vocational ability which one may or may not possess, but a simple, homely appetite for the job itself—a live and

vital interest in the work one happens to be doing. This ability and determination to do well that which is given him to do is possibly the greatest secret possessed by the valuable employee. This matter of mental attitude, for that is what it really is, is the mainspring of achievement and the principal drive underlying promotion in promising employees that we have seen.

The obvious effects of good or poor work habits on one's own personality and character make-up, and thus on one's future success or failure, and finally on one's happiness and unhappiness, should receive the serious and even solemn consideration of every job misfit, and—as a matter of fact—of every worker. For habit and mental attitude are powerful influences in one's work career, and the job one fills may be made an inspiration and stepping-stone to further advancement, or a mill-stone around the neck and that leads to failure.

HOME-MADE FAILURES

The sons of prominent people, of rich men, influential men, of preachers and reformers, of criminals, of the poor and obscure, and of broken-down aristocracy—all these have particular difficulties and complications which may prevent their leading normal lives.

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CHAPTER XIII

HOME-MADE FAILURES

THE failure of men in business can be accounted for by a number of causes, ranging from a general panic or a world war to insanity or drunkenness. Somewhere in this long list come the men whose failure is a direct result of the family situations in which they have grown up. These cases of failure engage our attention the more strikingly because we feel that they could be avoided. Whereas we accept as inevitable the effect of a general panic or of insanity in a man, we are bound to feel that a real understanding of family situations and relations could often bring about success and happiness where otherwise there would have been failure and unhappiness.

Sons of prominent people, sons of rich men, sons of influential men, of preachers and reformers, sons of criminals, of the poor and

obscure, children of broken-down aristocracy—all these have particular difficulties and complications which may prevent their leading normal lives with that degree of success to which their actual abilities entitle them.

The illustrations which follow are taken from life. They have been selected on the basis of whether or not they are types of failure and not isolated instances, and in each case I have tried to point out the reasons for the difficulty and the way it might have been avoided.

We are all familiar with the type of father, highly successful in his own business or profession, who, consciously or unconsciously, urges his son to follow in his footsteps, without regard to the boy's particular abilities. Or, perhaps, the initiative lies with the son, whose admiration for his father arouses in him a desire to imitate, whereas his own talents may lie in quite another direction. For the sons of famous or prominent men the way is doubly hard. Whether they choose the same career as their fathers or some other, their course is charged with difficulties, for they can hardly escape comparison with their fathers, and if

they are in any degree less brilliant, they constantly suffer from a sense of inferiority.

Take the case of Philip R. After being graduated with honors in biology from an eastern university, he came back to the middle western city in which his father, as the principal of the leading boys' school, had been for years a prominent and beloved figure. Half the important men of the city had grown up under his care, and every one in the town was familiar with old Dr. R.'s wisdom and integrity in civic matters, and with the beauty of his character.

Philip, settling down to teach biology in his father's school, was only too aware of his father's distinction, and day by day he was more overwhelmed and depressed by the fact that never would he be his father's equal; never would he have the same compelling influence on the character of his students; never could he become the same power in the community. He struggled on at his teaching, however—after all, it was his chosen profession—getting what comfort to his dwindling self-respect he could out of the biological experi-

ments which he carried on after school hours in a little laboratory he had fitted up for himself.

Then old Dr. R. died. Though this made no difference in Philip's outward circumstances, it may have eased off the strain of the constant mental comparison of himself to his father and made the next five or six years of plugging away in the class-room and the laboratory somewhat more bearable. To the world outside, Philip seemed a very charming young man; not, to be sure, the equal of his father, but for all that a promising teacher. It was only to himself that he appeared a hopeless, pitiable failure, kept going only by the need to support his wife and mother.

Then one day the young man, at the persistent urging of an older friend, read a paper on some biological research he had been making before a scientific society. The study had seemed to Philip too inconsequential to publish, but the society recognized its worth and congratulated him.

As a result, he returned to his laboratory and to his teaching with a new grip on himself

and the world. To-day he is professor of biology at a first-class university, a contented and successful man.

Philip R. was able eventually to triumph over his external circumstances by reason of his strong personality. His course would have been much simpler and the danger of failure much less if in the first place he had chosen for himself a career of an entirely different nature from that of his father, though encouraged in his decision by his father's sympathetic understanding. This would have greatly lessened the chances for jealousy, perhaps unconscious, on the part of the father for fear his son would surpass him, or of envy on the part of the son because of his father's superior abilities and attainments.

But since Philip's talents were actually of the same sort as his father's, and since he did have a keen interest in teaching, it would have been wiser for him to accept a position in a town where his father was not known and where he would have been accepted for what he himself was, and not constantly evaluated in the light of his father's achievements and per-

sonal qualities. He would thus have escaped the mental strain which resulted from that constant comparison in his own mind with his more brilliant parent and would have been free to devote all his energies to the work he loved.

Another type of failure due to family situations occurs in homes of great wealth. The answers to some of the problems arising from wealth are obvious enough. Overindulgence, for instance, leads to waste, idleness, and weakness. But this may be said to be a result not of wealth itself but of foolishness and bad judgment in distributing it.

The case of William T., however, shows the dangers which arise not from overindulgence by rich and foolish relations, but from wealth itself. His family did not live ostentatiously, was sincerely interested in the highest things, gave William a reasonable allowance, and did not permit him to exceed it. To be sure, he lived in an atmosphere of luxury, with a retinue of servants attendant. In these surroundings the boy, probably innately truculent and boastful, became almost unbearable by his con-

stant bragging to his playmates of his own possessions and his parents' position and influence, and by his bullying of the servants and his persistent reminding them of their dependent position. If he continued so, he might, because of the influence of his family, not turn out a business failure, but quite certainly a human one.

The very fact that William's parents had exercised a certain degree of wisdom in dealing with him made it difficult to see where their mistake lay and what should be done to correct it. His parents, in desperation, decided to place him in the public schools, where he would be thrown with an entirely different class of boys—boys whose fathers were laborers, mechanics, clerks, and the like, whose homes might be comfortable enough but certainly would boast no luxuries such as William's did.

It was pointed out to them that this association would only increase William's sense of superiority and he would be "lording it over" his schoolmates all the more because he knew that their economic status was actually far be-

low his own. Instead, they were told of a splendid school composed of boys whose fathers' names stood for wealth and power all over the country, whose social position was as far above William's as his was above the boys in his public school. Nevertheless, the surroundings and the routine of the school were of the simplest sort, and the boys were expected to do their own chores, such as making their beds, keeping the rooms tidy, mending their clothes and keeping them in order, and many odd jobs about the buildings and the grounds.

Accordingly, William was entered in this school, and though he did not at once cease his bragging and attempts at bullying, he soon found that they meant nothing in his new environment. His tales of his father's wealth did not impress his schoolmates, for their fathers had perhaps ten times as much. It was useless for him to boast of his physical prowess, for his schoolmates could beat him at games, could outrun him, could swim faster than he, and could fight better. So it was in every type of activity.

Gradually it dawned upon him that his

bullying of the servants had merely antagonized them, and his boastful sneering attitude toward his playmates spoiled his chances of making real friends. He came to the realization that people are judged by the things they do and are, not by what they think they are or by the money their fathers happen to have. He came to recognize other values than money values, to set new standards for himself. He lost his self-consciousness about his money, for in this atmosphere it did not differentiate him from any one else—and so he came to regard it not as the pivot about which his whole world revolved, but as a circumstance—as Henry Adams accepted two Presidents in his family, not realizing until he was twelve years old that every family did not have a President.

Quite another type of problem arises in the homes of clergymen. One of the hardest things for a minister's son to do is to reconcile the high principles which his father professes to have with that same father's sometimes pettiness and irritability in the home. It seems to such boys almost as if their fathers were consciously leading a dual life, and, turning away

in contempt from the existing discrepancy, they sometimes renounce the high ideals they have been taught and "go wild." A lack of real understanding of what their parents stand for doubtless accounts for failure on the part of many ministers' sons.

A rather pathetic case was Ellery H., the son of a distinguished clergyman in a cultured southern city. Ellery's father had always had a devoted personal following in his rich and socially prominent congregation. Ellery all his life saw his father accepting their tactfully offered gifts of a country home for the summer, a limousine for the afternoon, an inflated fee for performing the wedding ceremony of a favorite daughter. And he saw his father, his highly respected father, in return for these gifts and good salary, offering what seemed to his childish mind rather vague commodities—eloquence in the pulpit, a sonorous voice in the services, many apparently social calls.

The real ability behind it all, the real helpfulness to a parishioner in deep trouble, the real spirit of consecration inspiring it, were not realized by the boy, perhaps partly be-

cause his father had very little time left over from his parochial duties to spend in his own home, but primarily because Ellery did not inherit his father's peculiar abilities. So the boy grew up seeing what, had he been honest with himself, he would have called the graft and the fake of the situation and keenly alive to all their advantages.

Then came Ellery's turn to select a profession. All unconsciously he looked out for something vague and easy in which he could "get by," until finally he became a dilettante contributor to magazines, a not uncharming essayist. What matter that in this work he can never earn an adequate living? Has he not all his life been brought up to despise material things—even while enjoying them? All that his self-respect needs is a small enthusiastic group of admirers, and to them his very lack of material success is simply one more evidence of his spirituality.

In this case a man, far from forcing his son into his own profession or a similar one, simply allowed him to drift into a choice without a real knowledge of the type of ability the

choice called for. The fact that Ellery did not know he was a failure and did not recognize the difference between his father's contribution to the world and his own makes the situation even more regrettable.

What Ellery did not see was that his father's apparently effortless life was not actually effortless but the result of a very definite gift, a spirituality which enabled him to give comfort and spiritual guidance to his people. Because his father possessed this rare quality it did not follow that Ellery inherited it. If the sons of ministers could be made to see that their fathers' power is due to a quality as definite, for example, as a fine singing voice, they would understand that if they did not possess this quality their greatest effectiveness would lie in a field entirely different from the ministry. Indeed, it has been observed that ministers' sons are often most successful when they enter utterly different lines of work.

Another type of situation which leads to failure occurs in families of broken-down aristocracy. In this age, when so many people find their salvation in work, whether they need to

earn their livings or not, this problem is not so widespread as it once was, but nevertheless there are still many instances where the change from luxury to penury is devastating.

Hilary S. is a perfect example of this type. His father was not only a very wealthy man but an extremely brilliant and charming one—a gifted conversationalist, a witty storyteller, a graceful letter-writer. His mother was one of the acknowledged beauties of her day, and Hilary himself was a handsome, talented child. The three lived a picturesque life, moving from one European country to another.

But when Hilary was twelve his parents were suddenly killed, and this delightful life ended like a dream. He was recalled to America by his guardian, who informed him that his parents had left no money, but that he would educate Hilary. The boy was sent to a good school and later to the university. But just as he was graduated from the university his guardian died and he was left with nothing except the meager salary he earned from a job he secured as an unimportant customs inspector.

The life he now lived was shabby and colorless in comparison to the gaiety of his youth, and gradually he withdrew into himself, becoming more and more morose, and consoling himself as best he could with dreams of his romantic childhood and the life his parents had lived. All the real ability and imagination he inherited from them were rendered futile and unavailing by his yearnings for the glamorous past. Had they instilled in him during those first twelve years of his life the idea of ultimately fitting himself for some type of occupation which would be not only a method of earning his living but a means of self-expression, he might to-day be leading a life of usefulness, absorbed in his work and surrounded by friends whom he had drawn to himself by reason of his breadth of culture and wide interests.

One of the most significant factors in the failure of men is their flinching from reality. They do not like the world as they find it, are afraid of it, and so ignore it and flee from it, satisfying themselves with spurious successes or with pure fantasy—imagining the world to

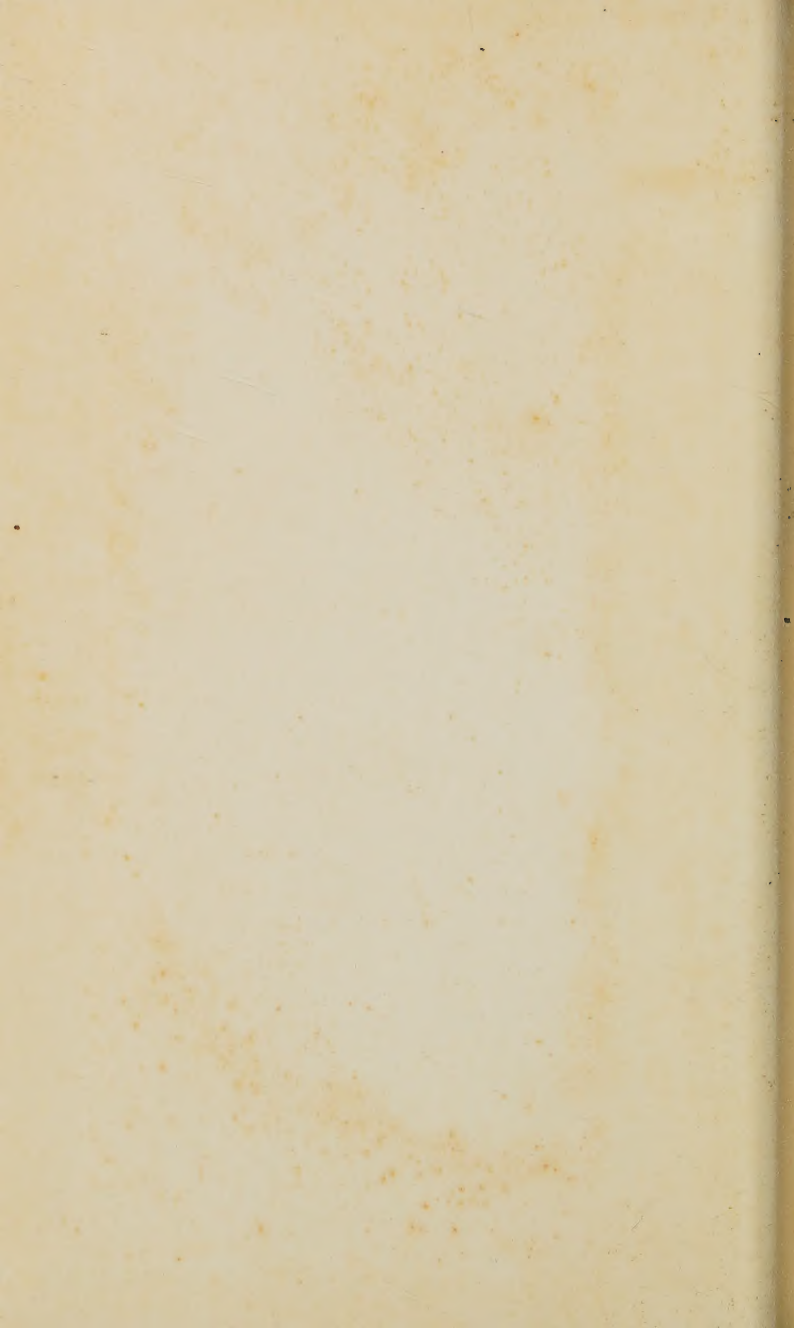
be what they would have it to be. They are not honest even with themselves, and succeed in making themselves believe they are different from every one else; that their case is a special one and that there is some good reason why no one could succeed under like circumstances. They are not strong enough to overcome the particular handicap which is preventing their complete adjustment, and so they retire more and more within themselves, letting the world go by and persuading themselves that they are exceptional persons, when to the cold eyes of the outsider they seem merely pitiable failures.

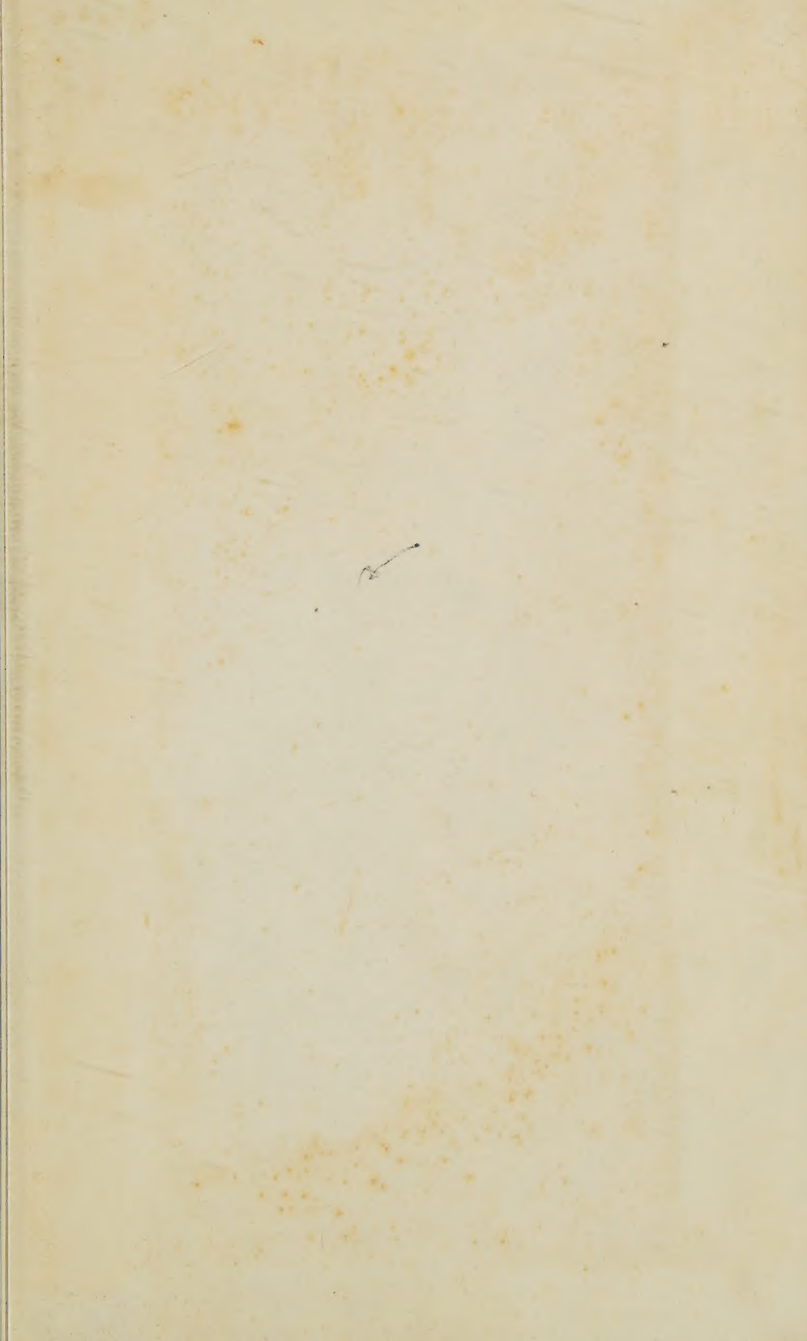
From all these cases of failure, due to family situations, one striking conclusion is to be drawn: The family situation alone does not cause the failure; it may determine the kind of failure, but it can only cause one when the individual is weaker than the opposing circumstances. In other words, a very healthy, or, as we say, morally strong personality, will succeed in an extremely bad environment, while the weak personality may fail even in a very good one—the less healthy the individ-

ual, the better the setting needed for success.

Thus a Philip R. will be strong enough to rise above unfavorable circumstances, though it may take him years to do so, but a William T., weak and disagreeable at the outset, will need extraordinary wisdom and guidance to make him a useful citizen and a happy and contented man.

The wise parent will seek to understand his child with this intent—will seek to evaluate his abilities and his weaknesses, to strengthen his weak points when that is possible by graded exercises in morale, much as he might use graded exercises in calisthenics, and to modify the environment for him when that is necessary. This means that the parent must honestly evaluate himself also and seek to understand better the part he plays in the situation of his child. The solution of his child's problem may require that he mend his own ways quite as much as those of his child.





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